ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN;

OR,

THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST.

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THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY," &c.

> What! will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
> Sink in the ground?
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER I.

The enmity and discord which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your Duke.
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have seal'd his rigorous statutes with their blood.

Comedy of Errors.

THE dawn had scarce begun to touch the distant horizon, when Arthur Philipson was on foot to prepare for his father's departure and his own, which, as arranged on the preceding night, was to take place two hours before the Landamman and his attendants proposed to leave the ruinous castle of Graffs-lust. It was no difficult matter for him to separate the neatly arranged packages which contained his father's

effects, from the clumsy bundles in which the baggage of the Swiss was deposited. The one set of mails was made up with the neatness of men accustomed to long and perilous journeys; the other, with the rude carelessness of those who rarely left their home, and who were altogether inexperienced travellers.

A servant of the Landamman assisted Arthur in this task, and in placing his father's baggage on the mule belonging to the bearded Deputy from Schwitz. From this man also he received instructions concerning the road from Graffs-lust to La Ferette, which was too plain and direct to render it likely that they should incur any risk of losing their way, as had befallen them when travelling on the Swiss mountains. Every thing being now prepared for their departure, the young Englishman awakened his father, and acquainted him that all was ready. He then retired towards the chimney, while his father, according to his daily custom, repeated the prayer of St Julian, the patron of travellers, and adjusted his dress for the journey.

It will not be wondered at, that, while the father went through his devotions, and equipped himself for travel, Arthur, with his heart full of what he had seen of Anne of Geierstein for some time before, and his brain dizzy with the recollection of the incidents of the preceding night, should have kept his eyes riveted on the door of the sleeping apartment at which he had last seen that young person disappear ; that is, unless the pale, and seemingly fantastic form, which had twice crossed him so strangely, should prove no wandering spirit of the elements, but the living substance of the person whose appearance it bore. So eager was his curiosity on this subject, that he strained his eyes to the utmost, as if it had been possible for them to have penetrated through wood and walls into the chamber of the slumbering maiden, in order to discover whether her eye or cheek bore any mark that she had last night been a watcher or a wanderer.

“ But that was the proof to which Rudolf appealed,” he said, internally, “ and Rudolf alone will have the opportunity of remarking the re-

sult. Who knows what advantage my communication may give him in his suit with yonder lovely creature? And what must she think of me, save as one light of thought and loose of tongue, to whom nothing extraordinary can chance, but he must hasten to babble it into the ears of those who are nearest to him at the moment? I would my tongue had been palsied ere I said a syllable to yonder proud, yet wily prize-fighter! I shall never see her more—that is to be counted for certain. I shall never know the true interpretation of those mysteries which hang around her. But to think I may have prated something tending to throw her into the power of yonder ferocious boor, will be a subject of remorse to me while I live."

Here he was startled out of his reverie by the voice of his father. "Why, how now, boy: art thou waking, Arthur, or sleeping on thy feet from the fatigue of last night's service?"

"Not so, my father," answered Arthur, at once recollecting himself. "Somewhat drowsy, perhaps; but the fresh morning air will soon put that to flight."

Walking with precaution through the group of sleepers who lay around, the elder Philipson, when they had gained the door of the apartment, turned back, and, looking on the straw couch which the large form of the Landamman, and the silvery beard of his constant companion, touched by the earliest beams of light, distinguished as that of Arnold Biederman, he muttered between his lips an involuntary adieu.

"Farewell, mirror of ancient faith and integrity,—farewell, noble Arnold,—farewell, soul of truth and candour,—to whom cowardice, selfishness, and falsehood, are alike unknown!"

And farewell, thought his son, to the loveliest, and most candid, yet most mysterious of maidens.—But the adieu, as may well be believed, was not, like that of his father, expressed in words.

They were soon after on the outside of the gate. The Swiss domestic was liberally recompensed, and charged with a thousand kind words of farewell and of remembrance to the Landamman from his English guests, mingled with hopes and wishes that they might soon

meet again in the Burgundian territory. The young man then took the bridle of the mule, and led the animal forward on their journey at an easy pace, his father walking by his side.

After a silence of some minutes, the elder Philipson addressed Arthur. "I fear me," he said, "we shall see the worthy Landamman no more. The youths who attend him are bent upon taking offence—the Duke of Burgundy will not fail, I fear, to give them ample occasion—and the peace which the excellent man desires for the land of his fathers, will be shipwrecked ere they reach the Duke's presence; though even were it otherwise, how the proudest prince in Europe will brook the moody looks of burgesses and peasants, (so will Charles of Burgundy term the friends we have parted from,) is a question too easily answered. A war, fatal to the interests of all concerned, save Louis of France, will certainly take place; and dreadful must be the contest if the ranks of the Burgundian chivalry shall encounter those iron sons of the mountains, before whom so many of the Austrian nobility have been repeatedly prostrated."

"I am so much convinced of the truth of what you say, my father," replied Arthur, "that I judge even this day will not pass over without a breach of truce. I have already put on my shirt of mail, in case we should meet bad company betwixt Graffs-lust and La Ferette; and I would to Heaven that you would observe the same precaution. It will not delay our journey; and I confess to you, that I, at least, will travel with much greater consciousness of safety should you do so."

"I understand you, my son," replied the elder Philipson. "But I am a peaceful traveller in the Duke of Burgundy's territories, and must not willingly suppose, that while under the shadow of his banner, I must guard myself against banditti, as if I were in the wilds of Palestine. As for the authority of his officers, and the extent of their exactions, I need not tell you that they are, in our circumstances, things to be submitted to without grief or grudging."

Leaving the two travellers to journey towards La Ferette at their leisure, I must transport my readers to the eastern gate of that small town,

which, situated on an eminence, had a commanding prospect on every side, but especially towards Bâle. It did not properly make a part of the dominions of the Duke of Burgundy, but had been placed in his hands in pawn, or in pledge, for the repayment of a considerable sum of money, due to Charles by the Emperor Sigismund of Austria, to whom the seigniory of the place belonged in property. But the town lay so conveniently for distressing the commerce of the Swiss, and inflicting on that people, whom he at once hated and despised, similar marks of his malevolence, as to encourage a general opinion, that the Duke of Burgundy would never listen to any terms of redemption, however equitable or advantageous, which might have the effect of restoring to the Emperor an advanced post, of such consequence to the gratification of his dislike, as the village of La Ferette.

The situation of the little town was in itself strong, but the fortifications which surrounded it were barely sufficient to repel any sudden attack, and not adequate to resist for any length of time a formal siege. The morning beams had

shone on the spire of the church for more than an hour, when a tall, thin, elderly man, wrapt in a morning gown, over which was buckled a broad belt, supporting on the left side a sword, on the right a dagger, approached the barbican of the eastern gate. His bonnet displayed a feather, which, or the tail of a fox in lieu of it, was the emblem of gentle blood throughout all Germany, and a badge highly prized by those who had a right to wear it.

The small party of soldiers who had kept watch there during the course of the preceding night, and supplied sentinels both for ward and out-look, took arms on the appearance of this individual, and drew themselves up in the form of a guard, which receives with military reverence an officer of importance. Archibald de Hagenbach's countenance, for it was the Governor himself, expressed that settled peevishness and ill temper which characterise the morning hours of a valetudinary debauchee. His head throbbed, his pulse was feverish, and his cheek was pale,—symptoms of his having spent the last night, as was his usual

custom, amid wine stoups and flagons. Judging from the haste with which his soldiers fell into their ranks, and the awe and silence which reigned among them, it appeared that they were accustomed to expect and dread his ill humour on such occasions. He glanced at them, accordingly, an inquisitive and dissatisfied look, as if he sought something on which to vent his peevishness, and then asked for the "loitering dog Kilian."

Kilian presently made his appearance, a stout hard-favoured man-at-arms, a Bavarian by birth, and by rank the personal squire of the Governor.

"What news of the Swiss churls, Kilian?" demanded Archibald de Hagenbach. "They should, by their thrifty habits, have been on the road two hours since. Have the peasant-clods presumed to ape the manners of gentlemen, and stuck by the flask till cock-crow?"

"By my faith, it may well be," answered Kilian; "the burghers of Bâle gave them full means of carousal."

"How, Kilian?—They dared not offer hos-

pitality to the Swiss drove of bullocks, after the charge we sent them to the contrary?"

"Nay, the Bâlese received them not into the town," replied the squire; "but I learned, by sure espial, that they afforded them means of quartering at Graffs-lust, which was furnished with many a fair gammon and pasty, to speak nought of flasks of Rhine-wine, barrels of beer, and stoups of strong waters."

"The Bâlese shall answer this, Kilian," said the Governor; "do they think I am for ever to be thrusting myself between the Duke and his pleasure on their behalf?—The fat porkers have presumed too much since we accepted some paltry gifts at their hands, more for gracing of them, than for any advantage we could make of their paltry donations. Was it not the wine from Bâle which we were obliged to drink out in pint goblets, lest it should become sour before morning?"

"It was drunk out, and in pint goblets too," said Kilian; "so much I can well remember."

"Why, go to then," said the Governor; "they shall know, these beasts of Bâle, that I hold

myself no way obliged by such donatives as these, and that my remembrance of the wines which I carouse, rests no longer than the head-ach which the mixtures they drug me with never fail of late years to leave behind, for the next morning's pastime."

"Your excellency," replied the squire, "will make it then a quarrel between the Duke of Burgundy and the city of Bâle, that they gave this indirect degree of comfort and assistance to the Swiss deputation?"

"Ay, marry will I," said De Hagenbach, "unless there be wise men among them, who shall show me good reasons for protecting them. Oh, the Bâlese do not know our Noble Duke, nor the gift he hath for chastising the gutter-blooded citizens of a free town. Thou canst tell them, Kilian, as well as any man, how he dealt with the villains of Liege, when they would needs be pragmatical."

"I will apprise them of the matter," said Kilian, "when opportunity shall serve, and I trust I shall find them in a temper disposed to cultivate your honourable friendship."

"Nay, if it is the same to them, it is quite indifferent to me, Kilian," continued the Governor; "but, methinks whole and sound throats are worth some purchase, were it only to swallow black puddings and schwarz-beer, to say nothing of Westphalian hams and Nierensteiner—I say, a slashed throat is a useless thing, Kilian."

"I will make the fat citizens to understand their danger, and the necessity of making interest," answered Kilian. "Sure, I am not now to learn how to turn the ball into your excellency's lap?"

"You speak well," said Sir Archibald;—"but how chanced it thou hast so little to say to the Switzers' leaguer? I should have thought an old trooper like thee would have made their pinions flutter amidst the good cheer thou tellest me of."

"I might as well have annoyed an angry hedgehog with my bare finger," said Kilian. "I surveyed Graffs-lust myself;—there were sentinels on the castle walls, a sentinel on the bridge, besides a regular patrol of these Swiss fellows who kept strict watch. So that there

was nothing to be done, otherwise, knowing your excellency's ancient quarrel, I would have had a hit at them, when they should never have known who hurt them."

"Well, they will be the better worth the looking after when they arrive," said De Hagenbach; "they come forth in state doubtless, with all their finery, their wives' chains of silver, their own medals, and rings of lead and copper.—Ah, the base hinds, they are unworthy that a man of noble blood should ease them of their trash!"

"There is better ware among them, if my intelligence hath not deceived me," replied Kilian; "there are merchants——"

"Pshaw! the pack-horses of Berne and Soleure," said the Governor, "with their paltry lumber, cloth too coarse to make covers for horses of any breeding, and linen that is more like hair-cloth than any composition of flax. I will strip them, however, were it but to vex the knaves. What! not content with claiming to be treated like an independent people, and sending forth deputies and embassies forsooth,

they expect, I warrant, to make the indemnities of ambassadors cover the introduction of a cargo of their contraband commodities, and thus insult the noble Duke of Burgundy, and cheat him at the same time? But De Hagenbach is neither knight nor gentleman if he allow them to pass unchallenged."

"And they are better worth being stopped," said Kilian, "than your excellency supposes; for they have English merchants along with them, and under their protection."

"English merchants!" exclaimed De Hagenbach, his eyes sparkling with joy; "English merchants, Kilian! Men talk of Cathay and Ind, where there are mines of silver, and gold, and diamonds; but, on the faith of a gentleman, I believe these brutish islanders have the caves of treasure in their own foggy land! And then the variety of their rich merchandize, —Ha, Kilian! is it a long train of mules—a jolly tinkling team?—By our Lady's glove! the sound of it is already jingling in my ears, more musically than all the harps of all the minnesingers at Heilbron!"

"Nay, my lord, there is no great train,—only two men, as I am given to understand, with scarce so much baggage as loads a mule; but, it is said, of infinite value, silk and samite, lace and furs, pearls and jewellery-work—perfumes from the East, and gold-work from Venice."

"Raptures and paradise! say not a word more," exclaimed the rapacious knight of Hagenbach; "they are all our own, Kilian! Why, these are the very men I have dreamed of twice a-week for this month past—ay, two men of middle stature, or somewhat under it—with smooth, round, fair, comely visages, having stomachs as plump as partridges, and purses as plump as their stomachs—Ha, what say'st thou to my dream, Kilian?"

"Only, that, to be quite soothfast," answered the squire, "it should have included the presence of a score, or thereabouts, of sturdy young giants as ever climbed cliff, or let bolt whistle at a chamois—a lusty plump of clubs, bills, and partisans, such as make shields crack like oaten cakes, and helmets ring like church-bells."

"The better, knave, the better!" exclaimed the Governor, rubbing his hands. "English pedlars to plunder! Swiss bullies to beat into submission! I wot well, we can have nothing of the Helvetian swine save their beastly bristles —it is lucky they bring these two island sheep along with them. But we must get ready our boar-spears, and clear the clipping-pens for exercise of our craft.—Here, Lieutenant Schonfeldt!"

An officer stepped forth.

"How many men are here on duty?"

"About sixty," replied the officer. "Twenty out on parties in different directions, and there may be forty or fifty in their quarters."

"Order them all under arms instantly;—hark ye, not by trumpet or bugle, but by warning them individually in their quarters, to draw to arms as quietly as possible, and rendezvous here at the eastern gate. Tell the villains there is booty to be gained, and they shall have their share."

"On these terms," said Schonfeldt, "they will walk over a spider's web without startling

the insect that wove it. I will collect them without loss of an instant."

"I tell thee, Kilian," continued the exulting commandant, again speaking apart with his confidential attendant, "nothing could come so luckily as the chance of this onslaught. Duke Charles desires to affront the Swiss,—not, look you, that he cares to act towards them by his own direct orders, in such a manner as might be termed a breach of public faith towards a peaceful embassy; but the gallant follower who shall save his prince the scandal of such an affair, and whose actions may be termed a mistake or misapprehension, shall, I warrant you, be accounted to have done knightly service. Perchance a frown may be passed upon him in public, but in private the Duke will know how to esteem him.—Why standest thou so silent, man, and what ails thy ugly ill-boding aspect? Thou art not afraid of twenty Switzer boys, and we at the head of such a band of spears?"

"The Swiss," answered Kilian, "will give and take good blows, yet I have no fear of them. But I like not that we should trust too

much to Duke Charles. That he would be, in the first instance, pleased with any dishonour done the Swiss is likely enough; but if, as your excellency hints, he finds it afterwards convenient to disown the action, he is a prince likely to give a lively colour to his disavowal by hanging up the actors."

"Pshaw!" said the commandant, "I know where I stand. Such a trick were like enough to be played by Louis of France, but it is foreign to the blunt character of our Bold One of Burgundy.—Why the devil stand'st thou still, man, simpering like an ape at a roasted chestnut, which he thinks too warm for his fingers?"

"Your excellency is wise as well as warlike," said the esquire, "and it is not for me to contest your pleasure. But this peaceful embassy —these English merchants—if Charles goes to war with Louis, as the rumour is current, what he should most of all desire is the neutrality of Switzerland, and the assistance of England, whose King is crossing the sea with a great army. Now you, Sir Archibald of Hagenbach, may well do that in the course of this very morn-

ing, which will put the Confederated Cantons in arms against Charles, and turn the English from allies into enemies."

"I care not," said the commandant; "I know the Duke's humour well, and if he, the master of so many provinces, is willing to risk them in a self-willed frolic, what is it to Archibald de Hagenbach, who has not a foot of land to lose in the cause?"

"But you have life, my lord," said the esquire.

"Ay, life!" replied the knight; "a paltry right to exist, which I have been ready to stake every day of my life for dollars—ay, and for creutzers—and think you I will hesitate to pledge it for broad-pieces, jewels of the East, and goldsmith's work of Venice? No, Kilian: these English must be eased of their bales, that Archibald de Hagenbach may drink a purer flask than their thin Moselle, and wear a brocade doublet instead of greasy velvet. Nor is it less necessary that Kilian should wear a seemly new jerkin, with a purse of ducats to jingle at his girdle."

"By my faith," said Kilian, "that last ar-

gument hath disarmed my scruples, and I give up the point, since it ill befits me to dispute with your excellency."

"To the work then," said his leader. "But stay—we must first take the church along with us. The priest of Saint Paul's hath been moody of late, and spread abroad strange things from the pulpit, as if we were little better than common pillagers and robbers. Nay, he hath had the insolence to warn me, as he termed it, twice, in strange form. It were well to break the growling mastiff's bald head; but since that might be ill taken by the Duke, the next point of wisdom is to fling him a bone."

"He may be a dangerous enemy," said the squire dubiously; "his power is great with the people."

"Tush!" replied Hagenbach, "I know how to disarm the shaveling. Send to him, and tell him to come hither to speak with me. Meanwhile have all our force under arms; let the barbican and barrier be well manned with archers; station spearmen in the houses on each hand of the gateway; and let the street be barricaded with

carts, well bound together, but placed as if they had been there by accident—place a body of determined fellows in these carts, and behind them. So soon as the merchants and their mules enter, (for that is the main point,) up with your drawbridge, down with the portcullis, send a volley of arrows among those who are without, if they make any scuffle; disarm and secure those who have entered, and are cooped up between the barricade before, and the ambush behind and around them.—And *then*, Kilian——"

"And then," said his esquire, "shall we, like merry Free Companions, be knuckle deep in the English budgets——"

"And, like jovial hunters," replied the knight, "elbow-deep in the Swiss blood."

"The game will stand at bay though," answered Kilian. "They are led by that Donnerhugel whom we have heard of, whom they call the Young Bear of Berne. They will turn to their defence."

"The better, man—wouldst thou kill sheep rather than hunt wolves? Besides, our toils are set, and the whole garrison shall assist. Shame

on thee, Kilian, thou wert not wont to have so many scruples!"

"Nor have I now," said Kilian. "But these Swiss bills and two-handed swords are no child's-play.—And then if you call all our garrison to the attack, to whom will your excellency intrust the defence of the other gates, and the circuit of the walls?"

"Lock, bolt, and chain up the gates," replied the Governor, "and bring the keys hither. There shall no one leave the place till this affair is over. Let some score of the citizens take arms for the duty of guarding the walls; and look they discharge it well, or I will lay a fine on them which they shall discharge to purpose."

"They will grumble," said Kilian. "They say, that not being the Duke's subjects, though the place is impledged to his Grace, they are not liable to military service."

"They lie! the cowardly slaves," answered De Hagenbach. "If I have not employed them much hitherto, it is because I scorn their assistance; nor would I now use their help, were it for any thing save to keep a watch, by look-

ing out straight before them. Let them obey, as they respect their property, persons, and families."

A deep voice behind them repeated the emphatic language of Scripture,—"I have seen the wicked man flourish in his power even like unto a laurel, but I returned and he was not—yea, I sought him, but he was not to be found."

Sir Archibald de Hagenbach turned sternly, and encountered the dark and ominous looks of the priest of Saint Paul's, dressed in the vestments of his order.

"We are busy, father," said the Governor, "and will hear your preachment another time."

"I come by your summons, Sir Governor," said the priest, "or I had not intruded myself where I well knew my preachments, if you term them so, will do no good."

"O, I crave your mercy, reverend father," said De Hagenbach. "Yes, it is true that I did send for you, to desire your prayers and kind intercession with Our Lady and Saint Paul, in some transactions which are likely to occur this morning, and in which, as the Lombard says, I do espy *roba di guadagno.*"

"Sir Archibald," answered the priest calmly, "I well hope and trust that you do not forget the nature of the glorified Saints, so far as to ask them for their blessing upon such exploits as you have been too oft engaged in since your arrival amongst us—an event which of itself gave token of the Divine anger. Nay, let me say, humble as I am, that decency to a servant of the altar should check you from proposing to me to put up prayers for the success of pillage and robbery."

"I understand you, father," said the rapacious Governor, "and you shall see I do. While you are the Duke's subject, you must by your office put up your prayers for his success in matters that are fairly managed. You acknowledge this with a graceful bend of your reverend head? Well, then, I will be as reasonable as you are. Say we desire the intercession of the good Saints, and of you, their pious orator, in something a little out of the ordinary path, and, if you will, somewhat of a doubtful complexion,—are we entitled to ask you or them for their pains and trouble without a just consideration? Surely no. Therefore I vow and solemnly promise, that if I

have good fortune in this morning's adventure, Saint Paul shall have an altar-cloth and a basin of silver, large or little, as my booty will permit —Our Lady a web of satin for a full suit, with a necklace of pearl for holidays—and thou, priest, some twenty pieces of broad English gold, for acting as go-between betwixt ourselves and the holy Saints, whom we acknowledge ourselves unworthy to negotiate with in our own profane person. And now, Sir Priest, do we understand each other, for I have little time to lose I know you have hard thoughts of me, but you see the devil is not quite so horrible as he is painted."

"Do we understand each other?" answered the black priest of Saint Paul's, repeating the Governor's question—"Alas, no! and I fear me we never shall. Hast thou never heard the words spoken by the holy hermit, Berchtold of Offringen, to the implacable Queen Agnes, who had revenged with such dreadful severity the assassination of her father, the Emperor Albert?"

"Not I," returned the knight; "I have neither studied the chronicles of emperors, nor the legends of hermits; and, therefore, Sir Priest, an you like not my proposal, let us have no far-

ther words on the matter. I am unwont to press my favours, or to deal with priests who require entreaty, when gifts are held out to them."

"Hear yet the words of the holy man," said the priest. "The time may come, and that shortly, when you would gladly desire to hear what you scornfully reject."

"Speak on, but be brief," said Archibald de Hagenbach; "and know, though thou mayst terrify or cajole the multitude, thou now speakest to one whose resolution is fixed far beyond the power of thy eloquence to melt."

"Know, then," said the priest of Saint Paul's, "that Agnes, daughter of the murdered Albert, after shedding oceans of blood in avenging his bloody death, founded at length the rich abbey of Kœnigsfeldt; and, that it might have a superior claim to renowned sanctity, made a pilgrimage in person to the cell of the holy hermit, and besought of him to honour her abbey by taking up his residence there. But what was his reply?—Mark it and tremble. 'Begone, ruthless woman,' said the holy man; 'God will not be served with blood-guiltiness, and rejects the

gifts which are obtained by violence and robbery. The Almighty loves mercy, justice, and humanity, and by the lovers of these only will he be worshipped.' And now, Archibald of Hagenbach, once, twice, thrice, hast thou had warning. Live as becomes a man on whom sentence is passed, and who must expect execution."

Having spoken these words with a menacing tone and frowning aspect, the priest of Saint Paul's turned away from the Governor, whose first impulse was to command him to be arrested. But when he recollected the serious consequences which attached to the laying violent hands on a priest, he suffered him to depart in peace, conscious that his own unpopularity might render any attempt to revenge himself an act of great rashness. He called, therefore, for a beaker of Burgundy, in which he swallowed down his displeasure, and had just returned to Kilian the cup, which he had drained to the bottom, when the warden winded a blast from the watch-tower, which betokened the arrival of some strangers at the gate of the city.

CHAPTER II.

I will resist such entertainment, till
My enemy has more power.

The Tempest.

"THAT blast was but feebly blown," said De Hagenbach, ascending to the ramparts, from which he could see what passed on the outside of the gate; "who approaches, Kilian?"

The trusty squire was hastening to meet him with the news.

"Two men with a mule, an it please your excellency; and merchants, I presume them to be."

"Merchants? 'sdeath, villain! pedlars you mean. Heard ever man of English merchants tramping it on foot, with no more baggage than

one mule can manage to carry? They must be beggarly Bohemians, or those whom the French people call Escossais. The knaves! they shall pay with the pining of their paunches for the poverty of their purses."

"Do not be too hasty, and please your excellency," quoth the squire; "small budgets hold rich goods. But rich or poor, they are our men, at least they have all the marks—the elder, well-sized, and dark-visaged, may write fifty and five years, a beard somewhat grizzled:—the younger, some two-and-twenty, taller than the first, and a well-favoured lad, with a smooth chin and light-brown mustachoes."

"Let them be admitted," said the Governor, turning back in order again to descend to the street, "and bring them into the folter-kammer of the toll-house."

So saying, he betook himself to the place appointed, which was an apartment in the large tower that protected the eastern gate-way, in which were deposited the rack, with various other instruments of torture, which the cruel and rapacious Governor was in the habit of applying

to such prisoners from whom he was desirous of extorting either booty or information. He entered the apartment, which was dimly lighted, and had a lofty Gothic roof which could be but imperfectly seen, while nooses and cords hanging down from thence, announced a fearful connexion with various implements of rusted iron that hung round the walls, or lay scattered on the floor.

A faint stream of light through one of the numerous and narrow slits, or shot-holes, with which the walls were garnished, fell directly upon the person and visage of a tall swarthy man, seated in what, but for the partial illumination, would have been an obscure corner of this evil-boding apartment. His features were regular, and even handsome, but of a character peculiarly stern and sinister. This person's dress was a cloak of scarlet; his head was bare, and surrounded by shaggy locks of black, which time had partly grizzled. He was busily employed in furbishing and burnishing a broad two-handed sword, of a peculiar shape, and considerably

shorter than the weapons of that kind which we have described as used by the Swiss. He was so deeply engaged in his task, that he started as the heavy door opened with a jarring noise, and the sword, escaping from his hold, rolled on the stone-floor with a heavy clash.

"Ha! Scharfgerichter," said the knight, as he entered the folter-kammer, "thou art preparing for thy duty?"

"It would ill become your excellency's servant," answered the man, in a harsh deep tone, "to be found idle. But the prisoner is not far off, as I can judge by the fall of my sword, which infallibly announces the presence of him who shall feel its edge."

"The prisoners are at hand, Francis," replied the Governor; "but thy omen has deceived thee for once. They are fellows for whom a good rope will suffice, and thy sword drinks only noble blood."

"The worse for Francis Steinernherz," replied the official in scarlet; "I trusted that your excellency, who have ever been a boun-

tiful patron, should this day have made me noble."

"Noble!" said the Governor; "thou art mad—Thou noble!"

"And wherefore not, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach? I think the name of Francis Steinernherz *von* Blut-acker will suit nobility, being fairly and legally won, as well as another. Nay, do not stare on me thus. If one of my profession shall do his grim office on nine men of noble birth, with the same weapon, and with a single blow to each patient, hath he not a right to his freedom from taxes, and his nobility by patent?"

"So says the law," said Sir Archibald,—"but rather more in scorn than seriously, I should judge, since no one was ever known to claim the benefit of it."

"The prouder boast for him," said the functionary, "that shall be the first to demand the honours due to a sharp sword and a clean stroke. I, Francis Steinernherz, will be the first noble of my profession, when I shall have dispatched one more knight of the Empire."

"Thou hast been ever in *my* service, hast thou not?" demanded De Hagenbach.

"Under what other master," replied the executioner, "could I have enjoyed such constant practice? I have executed your decrees on condemned sinners since I could swing a scourge, lift a crow-bar, or wield this trusty weapon; and who can say I ever failed of my first blow, or needed to deal a second? Tristrem of the Hospital, and his famous assistants, Petit André and Trois Eschelles, are novices compared with me, in the use of the noble and knightly sword. Marry, I should be ashamed to match myself with them in the field practice with bowstring and dagger; these are no feats worthy of a Christian man who would rise to honour and nobility."

"Thou art a fellow of excellent address, and I do not deny it," replied De Hagenbach. "But it cannot be—I trust it cannot be—that when noble blood is becoming scarce in the land, and proud churls are lording it over knights and barons, I myself should have caused so much to be spilled."

"I will number the patients to your excellency by name and title," said Francis, drawing out a scroll of parchment, and reading with a commentary as he went on,—"There was Count William of Elvershoe—he was my assay-piece, a sweet youth, and died most like a Christian."

"I remember—he courted my mistress," said Sir Archibald.

"He died on St Jude's, in the year of grace 1455," said the executioner.

"Go on—but name no dates," said the Governor.

"Sir Miles of Stockenborg——"

"He drove off my cattle," observed his excellency.

"Sir Louis of Riesenfeldt—" continued the executioner.

"He made love to my wife," commented the Governor.

"The three Jung-herrn of Lammerbourg—you made their father, the count, childless in one day."

"And he made me landless," said Sir Archi-

bald, "so that account is settled.—Thou needest read no farther," he continued, "I admit thy record, though it is written in letters somewhat of the reddest. I had counted these three young gentlemen as one execution."

"You did me the greater wrong," said Francis; "they cost three good blows of this good sword."

"Be it so, and God be with their souls," said Hagenbach. "But thy ambition must go to sleep for a while, Scharfgerichter, for the stuff that came hither to-day is for dungeon and cord, or perhaps a touch of the rack or strappadoe—there is no honour to win on them."

"The worse luck mine," said the executioner. "I had dreamed so surely that your honour had made me noble;—and then the fall of my sword!"

"Take a bowl of wine, and forget your auguries."

"With your honour's permission, no," said the executioner; "to drink before noon were to endanger the nicety of my hand."

"Be silent then, and mind your duty," said De Hagenbach.

Francis took up his sheathless sword, wiped the dust reverently from it, and withdrew into a corner of the chamber, where he stood leaning with his hands on the pommel of the fatal weapon.

Almost immediately afterwards, Kilian entered at the head of five or six soldiers, conducting the two Philipsons, whose arms were tied down with cords.

"Approach me a chair," said the Governor, and took his place gravely beside a table, on which stood writing materials. "Who are these men, Kilian, and wherefore are they bound?"

"So please your excellency," said Kilian, with a deep respect of manner, which entirely differed from the tone, approaching to familiarity, with which he communicated with his master in private, "we thought it well that these two strangers should not appear armed in your gracious presence; and when we required of them to surrender their weapons at the gate, as is the custom of the garrison, this young gallant must

needs offer resistance. I admit he gave up his weapon at his father's command."

"It is false!" exclaimed young Philipson; but his father making a sign to him to be silent, he obeyed instantly.

"Noble sir," said the elder Philipson, "we are strangers, and unacquainted with the rules of this citadel; we are Englishmen, and unaccustomed to submit to personal mishandling; we trust you will have excuse for us, when we found ourselves, without any explanation of the cause, rudely seized on by we knew not whom. My son, who is young and unthinking, did partly draw his weapon, but desisted at my command, without having altogether unsheathed his sword, far less made a blow. For myself, I am a merchant, accustomed to submit to the laws and customs of the countries in which I traffic; I am in the territories of the Duke of Burgundy, and I know his laws and customs must be just and equitable. He is the powerful and faithful ally of England, and I fear nothing while under his banner."

"Hem! Hem!" replied De Hagenbach, a

little disconcerted by the Englishman's composure, and perhaps recollecting, that, unless his passions were awakened, (as in the case of the Swiss, whom he detested,) Charles of Burgundy desired the character of a just though severe prince,—"Fair words are well, but hardly make amends for foul actions. You have drawn swords in riot, and opposition to the Duke's soldiers, when obeying the mandates which regulate their watch."

"Surely, sir," answered Philipson, "this is a severe construction of a most natural action. But, in a word, if you are disposed to be rigorous, the simple action of drawing, or attempting to draw a sword in a garrison town, is only punishable by a pecuniary fine, and such we must pay, if it be your will."

"Now, here is a silly sheep," said Kilian to the executioner, beside whom he had stationed himself, somewhat apart from the group, "who voluntarily offers his own fleece to the clipper."

"It will scarcely serve as a ransom for his throat, Sir Squire," answered Francis Steinern-

herz; "for, look you, I dreamed last night that our master made me noble, and I knew by the fall of my sword that this is the man by whom I am to mount to gentility. I must this very day deal on him with my good sword."

"Why, thou ambitious fool," said the esquire, "this is no noble, but an island pedlar—a mere English citizen."

"Thou art deceived," said the executioner, "and hast never looked on men when they are about to die."

"Have I not?" said the squire. "Have I not looked on five pitched fields, besides skirmishes and ambuscades innumerable?"

"That tries not the courage," said the Scharfgerichter. "All men will fight when pitched against each other. So will the most paltry curs,—so will the dunghill fowls. But he is brave and noble, who can look on a scaffold and a block, a priest to give him absolution, and the headsman and good sword which is to mow him down in his strength, as he would look upon things indifferent; and such a man is that whom we now behold."

"Yes," answered Kilian, "but that man looks not on such an apparatus—he only sees our illustrious patron, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach."

"And he who looks upon Sir Archibald," said the executioner, "being, as yonder man assuredly is, a person of sense and apprehension, looks he not upon sword and headsman? Assuredly that prisoner apprehends as much, and being so composed as he is under such conviction, it shows him to be a nobleman by blood, or may I myself never win nobility."

"Our master will come to compromise with him, I judge," replied Kilian; "he looks smilingly on him."

"Never trust to me then," said the man in scarlet; "there is a glance in Sir Archibald's eye which betokens blood, as surely as the dog-star bodes pestilence."

While these dependants of Sir Archibald de Hagenbach were thus conversing apart, their master had engaged the prisoners in a long train of captious interrogatories concerning their business in Switzerland, their connexion with the

Landamman, and the cause of their travelling into Burgundy, to all which the senior Philipson gave direct and plain answers, excepting to the last. He was going, he said, into Burgundy, for the purpose of his traffic—his wares were at the disposal of the Governor, who might detain all, or any part of them, as he might be disposed to make himself answerable to his master. But his business with the Duke was of a private nature, respecting some particular matters of commerce, in which others as well as he himself were interested. To the Duke alone, he declared, would he communicate the affair; and he pressed it strongly on the Governor, that if he should sustain any damage in his own person or that of his son, the Duke's severe displeasure would be the inevitable consequence.

De Hagenbach was evidently much embarrassed by the steady tone of his prisoner, and more than once held council with the bottle, his never-failing oracle in cases of extreme difficulty. Philipson had readily surrendered to the Governor a list or invoice of his merchandise,

which was of so inviting a character, that Sir Archibald absolutely gloated over it. After remaining in deep meditation for some time, he raised his head and spoke thus:—

"You must be well aware, Sir Merchant, that it is the Duke's pleasure that no Swiss merchandise shall pass through his territories; and that, nevertheless, you having been, by your own account, some time in that country, and having also accompanied a body of men calling themselves Swiss Deputies, I am authorized to believe that these valuable articles are rather the property of those persons, than of a single individual of so poor an appearance as yourself, and that should I demand pecuniary satisfaction, three hundred pieces of gold would not be an extravagant fine for so bold a practice; and you might wander where you will with the rest of your wares, so you bring them not into Burgundy."

"But it is to Burgundy, and to the Duke's presence, that I am expressly bound," said the Englishman. "If I go not thither my journey is wrecked, and the Duke's displeasure is cer-

tain to light on those who may molest me. For I make your excellency aware, that your gracious Prince already knows of my journey, and will make strict inquiry where and by whom I have been intercepted."

Again the Governor was silent, endeavouring to decide how he might best reconcile the gratification of his rapacity with precaution for his safety. After a few minutes' consideration he again addressed his prisoner.

"Thou art very positive in thy tale, my good friend; but my orders are equally so to exclude merchandise coming from Switzerland. What if I put thy mule and baggage under arrest?"

"I cannot withstand your power, my lord, to do what you will. I will in that case go to the Duke's footstool, and do my errand there."

"Ay, and my errand also," answered the Governor. "That is, thou wilt carry thy complaint to the Duke against the Governor of La Ferette, for executing his orders too strictly?"

"On my life and honest word," answered the Englishman, "I will make no complaint. Leave me but my ready money, without which

I can hardly travel to the Duke's court, and I will look no more after these goods and wares than the stag looks after the antlers which he shed last year."

Again the Governor of La Ferette looked doubtful, and shook his head.

"Men in such a case as yours," he said, "cannot be trusted, nor, to say truth, is it reasonable to expect they should be trust-worthy. These same wares, designed for the Duke's private hand, in what do they consist?"

"They are under seal," replied the Englishman.

"They are of rare value, doubtless?" continued the Governor.

"I cannot tell," answered the elder Philipson; "I know the Duke sets great store by them. But your excellency knows, that great princes sometimes place a high value on trifles."

"Bear you them about you?" said the Governor. "Take heed how you answer—Look around you on these engines, which can bring a dumb man to speak, and consider I have the power to employ them!"

"And I the courage to support their worst infliction," answered Philipson, with the same impenetrable coolness which he had maintained throughout the whole conference.

"Remember, also," said Hagenbach, "that I can have your person searched as thoroughly as your mails and budgets."

"I do remember that I am wholly in thy power; and that I may leave thee no excuse for employing force on a peaceful traveller, I will own to you," said Philipson, "that I have the Duke's packet in the bosom of my doublet."

"Bring it forth," answered the governor.

"My hands are tied, both in honour and literally," said the Englishman.

"Pluck it from his bosom, Kilian," said Sir Archibald; "let us see this gear he talks of."

"Could resistance avail," replied the stout merchant, "you should pluck forth my heart first. But I pray all who are present to observe, that the seals are every one whole and unbroken at this moment when it is forcibly taken from my person."

As he spoke thus he looked around on the soldiers, whose presence De Hagenbach had perhaps forgotten.

"How, dog!" said Sir Archibald, giving way to his passion, "would you stir up mutiny among my men-at-arms?—Kilian, let the soldiers wait without."

So saying, he hastily placed under cover of his own robe the small but remarkably well-secured packet, which Kilian had taken from the merchant's person. The soldiers withdrew, lingering, however, and looking back, like children brought away from a show before its final conclusion.

"So, fellow!" again began De Hagenbach, "we are now more private. Wilt thou deal more on the level with me, and tell me what this packet is, and whence it comes?"

"Could all your garrison be crowded into this room, I can only answer as before.—The contents I do not precisely know—the person by whom it was sent I am determined not to name."

"Perhaps your son," said the Governor, "may be more compliant."

"He cannot tell you that, of which he is himself ignorant," answered the merchant.

"Perchance the rack may make you both find your tongues;—and we will try it on the young fellow first, Kilian, since thou knowest we have seen men shrink from beholding the wrenched joints of their children, that would have committed their own old sinews to the stretching with much endurance."

"You may make the trial," said Arthur, "and Heaven will give me strength to endure"——

"And me courage to behold," added his father.

All this while the Governor was turning and re-turning the little packet in his hand, curiously inspecting every fold, and regretting, doubtless, in secret, that a few patches of wax, placed under an envelope of crimson-satin, and ligatures of twisted silk cord, should prevent his eager eyes from ascertaining the nature of the treasure which he doubted not it concealed. At

length he again called in the soldiers, and delivered up the two prisoners to their charge, commanding that they should be kept safely, and in separate holds, and that the father, in particular, should be most carefully looked after.

"I take you all here to witness," exclaimed the elder Philipson, despising the menacing signs of De Hagenbach, "that the Governor detains from me a packet, addressed to his most gracious lord and master, the Duke of Burgundy."

De Hagenbach actually foamed at the mouth with passion.

"And should I *not* detain it?" he exclaimed, in a voice inarticulate with rage. "May there not be some foul practice against the life of our most gracious sovereign by poison or otherwise, in this suspicious packet, brought by a most suspicious bearer? Have we never heard of poisons which do their work by the smell? And shall we, who keep the gate, as I may say, of his Grace of Burgundy's dominions, give access to what may rob Europe of its pride of chivalry, Burgundy of its prince, and Flanders of her fa-

ther ?—No ! Away with these miscreants, soldiers—down to the lowest dungeons with them—keep them separate, and watch them carefully. This treasonable practice has been meditated with the connivance of Berne and Soleure."

Thus Sir Archibald de Hagenbach raved, with a raised voice and inflamed countenance, lashing himself as it were into passion, until the steps of the soldiers, and the clash of their arms, as they retired with the prisoners, were no longer audible. His complexion, when these had ceased, waxed paler than was natural to him—his brow was furrowed with anxious wrinkles—and his voice became lower and more hesitating than ordinary, as, turning to his esquire, he said, "Kilian, we stand upon a slippery plank, with a raging torrent beneath us—What is to be done?"

"Marry, to move forward with a resolved yet prudent step," answered the crafty Kilian. "It is unlucky that all these fellows should have seen the packet, and heard the appeal of yonder iron-nerved trader. But this ill luck

has befallen us, and the packet having been in your excellency's hands, you will have all the credit of having broken the seals; for, though you leave them as entire as the moment they were impressed, it will only be supposed they have been ingeniously replaced. Let us see what are the contents, before we determine what is to be done with them. They must be of rare value, since the churl merchant was well contented to leave behind all his rich mule's-load of merchandise, so that this precious packet might pass unexamined."

"They may be papers on some political matter. Many such, and of high importance, pass secretly between Edward of England and our bold Duke." Such was the reply of De Hagenbach.

"If they be papers of consequence to the Duke," answered Kilian, "we can forward them to Dijon.—Or they may be such as Louis of France would purchase with their weight of gold."

"For shame, Kilian," said the knight; "wouldst thou have me betray my master's

secrets to the King of France? Sooner would I lay my head on the block."

"Indeed? And yet your excellency hesitates not to"——

Here the squire stopped, apparently for fear of giving offence, by affixing a name too broad and intelligible to the practices of his patron.

"To plunder the Duke, thou wouldst say, thou impudent slave? And, saying so, thou wouldst be as dull as thou art wont to be," answered De Hagenbach. "I partake, indeed, in the plunder which the Duke takes from aliens; and reason good. Even so the hound and the hawk have their share of the quarry they bring down—ay, and the lion's share, too, unless the huntsman or falconer be all the nearer to them. Such are the perquisites of my rank; and the Duke, who placed me here for the gratification of his resentment, and the bettering of my fortune, does not grudge them to a faithful servant. And, indeed, I may term myself, in so far as this territory of La Ferette extends, the Duke's full representative, or, as it may be termed, ALTER EGO—and, thereupon, I will open this pack-

et, which, being addressed to him, is thereby equally addressed to me."

Having thus in a manner talked himself up to an idea of his own high authority, he cut the strings of the packet which he had all this while held in his hand, and, undoing the outer coverings, produced a very small case made of sandal-wood.

"The contents," he said, "had need to be valuable, as they lie in so little compass."

So saying he pressed the spring, and the casket, opening, displayed a necklace of diamonds distinguished by brilliancy and size, and apparently of extraordinary value. The eyes of the avaricious Governor, and his no less rapacious attendant, were so dazzled with the unusual splendour, that for some time they could express nothing save joy and surprise.

"Ay, marry, sir," said Kilian, "the obstinate old knave had reasons for his hardihood. My own joints should have stood a strain or two ere I surrendered such sparklers as these.— And now, Sir Archibald, may your trusty follower ask you how this booty is to be divided

between the Duke and his Governor, according to the most approved rules of garrison towns?"

"Faith, we will suppose the garrison stormed, Kilian; and in a storm, thou know'st, the first finder takes all—with due consideration always of his trusty followers."

"As myself, for example," said Kilian.

"Ay, and myself, for example," answered a voice, which sounded like the echo of the esquire's words, from the remote corner of the ancient apartment.

"'Sdeath! we are overheard," exclaimed the Governor, starting and laying his hand on his dagger.

"Only by a faithful follower, as the worthy esquire observes," said the executioner, moving slowly forward.

"Villain, how didst thou dare watch me?" said Sir Archibald de Hagenbach.

"Trouble not yourself for that, sir," said Kilian. "Honest Steinernherz has no tongue to speak, or ear to hear, save according to your pleasure. Indeed, we must shortly have taken

him into our counsels, seeing these men must be dealt upon, and that speedily."

"Indeed!" said De Hagenbach; "I had thought they might be spared."

"To tell the Duke of Burgundy how the Governor of La Ferette accounts to his treasurer for the duties and forfeitures at his custom-house?" demanded Kilian.

"'Tis true," said the knight; "dead men have neither teeth nor tongue—they bite not, and they tell no tales. Thou wilt take order with them, Scharfgerichter."

"I will, my lord," answered the executioner, "on condition that, if this must be in the way of dungeon execution, which I call cellar practice, my privilege to claim nobility shall be saved and reserved to me, and the execution shall be declared to be as effectual to my claim, as it might have been, if the blow had been dealt in broad daylight, with my honourable blade of office."

De Hagenbach stared at the executioner, as not understanding what he meant; on which Kilian took occasion to explain, that the Scharf-

gerichter was strongly impressed, from the free and dauntless conduct of the elder prisoner, that he was a man of noble blood, from whose decapitation he would himself derive all the advantages proposed to the headsman who should execute his function on nine men of illustrious extraction.

"He may be right," said Sir Archibald, "for here is a slip of parchment, commending the bearer of this carcanet to the Duke, desiring him to accept it as a true token from one well known to him, and to give the bearer full credence in all that he should say on the part of those by whom he is sent."

"By whom is the note signed, if I may make bold to ask?" said Kilian.

"There is no name—the Duke must be supposed to collect that information from the gems, or perhaps the handwriting."

"On neither of which he is likely to have a speedy opportunity of exercising his ingenuity," said Kilian.

De Hagenbach looked at the diamonds, and smiled darkly. The Scharfgerichter, encou-

raged by the familiarity into which he had in a manner forced himself, returned to his plea, and insisted on the nobility of the supposed merchant. Such a trust, and such a letter of unlimited credence, could never, he contended, be intrusted to a man meanly born.

"Thou art deceived, thou fool," said the knight; "Kings now use the lowest tools to do their dearest offices. Louis has set the example of putting his barber, and the valets of his chamber, to do the work formerly intrusted to dukes and peers; and other monarchs begin to think that it is better, in choosing their agents for important affairs, to judge rather by the quality of men's brains than that of their blood. And as for the stately look and bold bearing which distinguish yonder fellow in the eyes of cravens like thee, it belongs to his country, not his rank. Thou think'st it is in England as in Flanders, where a city-bred burgher of Ghent, Liege, or Ypres, is as distinct an animal from a knight of Hainault, as a Flanders waggon horse from a Spanish jennet. But thou art deceived. England has many a merchant as haughty of

heart, and as prompt of hand, as any noble-born son of her rich bosom. But be not dejected, thou foolish man; do thy business well on this merchant, and we shall presently have on our hands the Landamman of Unterwalden, who, though a churl by his choice, is yet a nobleman by blood, and shall, by his well-deserved death, aid thee to get rid of the peasant slough which thou art so weary of."

"Were not your excellency better adjourn these men's fate," said Kilian, "till you hear something of them from the Swiss prisoners whom we shall presently have in our power?"

"Be it as you will," said Hagenbach, waving his hand, as if putting aside some disagreeable task. "But let all be finished ere I hear of it again."

The stern satellites bowed obedience, and the deadly conclave broke up; their chief carefully securing the valuable gems, which he was willing to purchase at the expense of treachery to the sovereign in whose employment he had enlisted himself, as well as the blood of two innocent men. Yet, with a weakness of mind not

uncommon to great criminals, he shrunk from the thoughts of his own baseness and cruelty, and endeavoured to banish the feeling of dishonour from his mind, by devolving the immediate execution of his villainy upon his subordinate agents.

CHAPTER III.

And this place our forefather's built for Man!
Old Play.

The dungeon in which the younger Philipson was immured, was one of those gloomy caverns which cry shame on the inhumanity of our ancestors. They seem to have been almost insensible to the distinction betwixt innocence and guilt, as the consequences of mere accusation must have been far more severe in those days, than is in our own that species of imprisonment which is adjudged as an express punishment for crime.

The cell of Arthur Philipson was of considerable length, but dark and narrow, and dug out

of the solid rock upon which the tower was founded. A small lamp was allowed him, not, however, without some grumbling, but his arms were still kept bound; and when he asked for a draught of water, one of the grim satellites, by whom he was thrust into this cell, answered surlily, that he might endure his thirst for all the time his life was likely to last—a gloomy response, which augured that his privations would continue as long as his life, yet neither be of long duration. By the dim lamp he had groped his way to a bench, or rough seat, cut in the rock; and, as his eyes got gradually accustomed to the obscurity of the region in which he was immured, he became aware of a ghastly cleft in the floor of his dungeon, somewhat resembling the opening of a draw-well, but irregular in its aperture, and apparently the mouth of a gulf of Nature's conformation, slightly assisted by the labour of human art.

"Here, then, is my death-bed," he said, "and that gulf perhaps the grave which yawns

for my remains! Nay, I have heard of prisoners being plunged into such horrid abysses while they were yet alive, to die at leisure, crushed with wounds, their groans unheard, and their fate unpitied!"

He approached his head to the dismal cavity, and heard, as at a great depth, the sound of a sullen, and, as it seemed, subterranean stream. The sunless waves appeared murmuring for their victim. Death is dreadful at all ages; but in the first springtide of youth, with all the feelings of enjoyment afloat, and eager for gratification, to be snatched forcibly from the banquet to which the individual has but just sat down, is peculiarly appalling, even when the change comes in the ordinary course of nature. But to sit like young Philipson on the brink of the subterranean abyss, and ruminate in horrid doubt concerning the mode in which death was to be inflicted, was a situation which might break the spirit of the boldest; and the unfortunate captive was wholly unable to suppress the natural tears that flowed from his eyes in torrents,

and which his bound arms did not permit him to wipe away. We have already noticed, that although a gallant young man in aught of danger which was to be faced and overcome by active exertion, the youth was strongly imaginative, and sensitive to a powerful extent to all those exaggerations, which, in a situation of helpless uncertainty, fancy lends to distract the soul of him who must passively expect an approaching evil.

Yet the feelings of Arthur Philipson were not selfish. They reverted to his father, whose just and noble character was as much formed to attract veneration, as his unceasing paternal care and affection to excite love and gratitude. He, too, was in the hands of remorseless villains, who were determined to conceal robbery by secret murder—he, too, undaunted in so many dangers, resolute in so many encounters, lay bound and defenceless, exposed to the dagger of the meanest stabber. Arthur remembered, too, the giddy peak of the rock near Geierstein, and the grim vulture which claimed him as its prey. Here was no angel to burst through the mist,

and marshal him on a path of safety—here the darkness was subterranean and eternal, saving when the captive should behold the knife of the ruffian flash against the lamp, which lent him light to aim the fatal blow. This agony of mind lasted until the feelings of the unhappy prisoner arose to ecstasy. He started up, and struggled so hard to free himself of his bonds, that it seemed they should have fallen from him as from the arms of the mighty Nazarene. But the cords were of too firm a texture; and, after a violent and unavailing struggle, in which the ligatures seemed to enter his flesh, the prisoner lost his balance, and, while the feeling thrilled through him that he was tumbling backward into the subterranean abyss, he fell to the ground with great force.

Fortunately he escaped the danger which in his agony he apprehended, but so narrowly, that his head struck against the low and broken fence with which the mouth of the horrible pit was partly surrounded. Here he lay stunned and motionless, and, as the lamp was extinguished in his fall, immersed in absolute and

total darkness. He was recalled to sensation by a jarring noise.

"They come—they come—the murderers! Oh, Lady of Mercy! and oh, gracious Heaven, forgive my transgressions!"

He looked up, and observed with dazzled eyes, that a dark form approached him, with a knife in one hand, and a torch in the other. He might well have seemed the man who was to do the last deed upon the unhappy prisoner, if he had come alone. But he came not alone—his torch gleamed upon the white dress of a female, which was so much illuminated by it, that Arthur could discover a form, and had even a glimpse of features, never to be forgotten, though now seen under circumstances least of all to be expected. The prisoner's unutterable astonishment impressed him with a degree of awe which overcame even his personal fear.—"Can these things be?" was his muttered reflection; "has she really the power of an elementary spirit? has she conjured up this earthlike and dark demon to concur with her in my deliverance?"

It appeared as if his guess were real; for the figure in black, giving the light to Anne of Geierstein, or at least the form which bore her perfect resemblance, stooped over the prisoner, and cut the cord that bound his arms, with so much dispatch, that it seemed as if it fell from his person at a touch. Arthur's first attempt to arise was unsuccessful, and a second time it was the hand of Anne of Geierstein—a living hand, sensible to touch as to sight—which aided to raise and to support him, as it had formerly done when the river thundered at their feet. Her touch produced an effect far beyond that of the slight personal aid which the maiden's strength could have rendered. Courage was restored to his heart, vigour and animation to his benumbed and bruised limbs; such influence does the human mind, when excited to energy, possess over the infirmities of the human body. He was about to address Anne in accents of the deepest gratitude. But the accents died away on his tongue, when the mysterious female, laying her finger on her lips, made him a sign to be silent,

and at the same time beckoned him to follow her. He obeyed in silent amazement. They passed the entrance of the melancholy dungeon, and through one or two short but intricate passages, which, cut out of the rock in some places, and built in others with hewn stone of the same kind, probably led to holds similar to that in which Arthur was so lately a captive.

The recollection that his father might be immured in some such horrid cell as he himself had just quitted, induced Arthur to pause as they reached the bottom of a small winding staircase, which conducted apparently from this region of the building.

"Come," he said, "dearest Anne, lead me to his deliverance! I must not leave my father."

She shook her head impatiently, and beckoned him on.

"If your power extends not to save my father's life, I will remain and save him or die!—Anne, dearest Anne"—

She answered not, but her companion replied, in a deep voice, not unsuitable to his appear-

ance, "Speak, young man, to those who are permitted to answer you; or rather, be silent, and listen to my instructions, which direct to the only course which can bring thy father to freedom and safety."

They ascended the stair, Anne of Geierstein going first; while Arthur, who followed close behind, could not help thinking that her form gave existence to a part of the light which her garment reflected from the torch. This was probably the effect of the superstitious belief impressed on his mind by Rudolf's tale respecting her mother, and which was confirmed by her sudden appearance in a place and situation where she was so little to have been expected. He had not much time, however, to speculate upon her appearance or demeanour, for, mounting the stair with a lighter pace than he was able at the time to follow closely, she was no longer to be seen when he reached the landing place. But whether she had melted into the air, or turned aside into some other passage, he was not permitted a moment's leisure to examine.

"Here lies your way," said his sable guide; and at the same time dashing out the light, and seizing Philipson by the arm, he led him along a dark gallery of considerable length. The young man was not without some momentary misgivings, while he recollected the ominous looks of his conductor, and that he was armed with a dagger, or knife, which he could plunge of a sudden into his bosom. But he could not bring himself to dread treachery from any one whom he had seen in company with Anne of Geierstein; and in his heart he demanded her pardon for the fear which had flashed across him, and resigned himself to the guidance of his companion, who advanced with hasty but light footsteps, and cautioned him by a whisper to do the same.

"Our journey," he at length said, "ends here."

As he spoke, a door gave way and admitted them into a gloomy Gothic apartment, furnished with large oaken presses, apparently filled with books and manuscripts. As Arthur look-

ed round, with eyes dazzled with the sudden gleam of daylight from which he had been for some time excluded, the door by which they had entered disappeared. This, however, did not greatly surprise him, who judged that, being formed in appearance to correspond with the presses around the entrance which they had used, it could not when shut be distinguished from them; a device sometimes then practised, as indeed it often is at the present day. He had now a full view of his deliverer, who, when seen by daylight, showed only the vestments and features of a clergyman, without any of that expression of supernatural horror, which the partial light and the melancholy appearance of all in the dungeon had combined to impress on him.

Young Philipson once more breathed with freedom, as one awakened from a hideous dream; and the supernatural qualities with which his imagination had invested Anne of Geierstein having begun to vanish, he addressed his deliverer thus:—" That I may testify my

thanks, holy father, where they are so especially due, let me inquire of you if Anne of Geierstein"——

"Speak of that which pertains to your house and family," answered the priest, as briefly as before. "Hast thou so soon forgot thy father's danger?"

"By heavens, no!" replied the youth; "tell me but how to act for his deliverance, and thou shalt see how a son can fight for a parent!"

"It is well, for it is needful," said the priest. "Don thou this vestment, and follow me."

The vestment presented was the gown and hood of a novice.

"Draw the cowl over thy face," said the priest, "and return no answer to any man who meets thee. I will say thou art under a vow.—May Heaven forgive the unworthy tyrant who imposes on us the necessity of such profane dissimulation! Follow me close and near—beware that you speak not."

The business of disguise was soon accomplished, and the Priest of St Paul's, for such he was, moving on, Arthur followed him a pace or two

behind, assuming as well as he could the modest step and humble demeanour of a spiritual novice. On leaving the library, or study, and descending a short stair, he found himself in the street of La Ferette. Irresistibly tempted to look back, he had only time, however, to see that the house he had left was a very small building of a Gothic character, on the one side of which rose the church of St Paul's, and on the other the stern black gate-house, or entrance-tower.

"Follow me, Melchior," said the deep voice of the Priest; and his keen eyes were at the same time fixed upon the supposed novice, with a look which instantly recalled Arthur to a sense of his situation.

They passed along, nobody noticing them, unless to greet the priest with a silent obeisance, or muttered phrase of salutation, until, having nearly gained the middle of the village, the guide turned abruptly off from the street, and moving northward by a short lane, reached a flight of steps, which, as usual in fortified towns, led to the banquette, or walk behind the parapet, which was of the old Gothic fashion, flanked

with towers from space to space, of different forms and various heights at different angles.

There were sentinels on the walls; but the watch, as it seemed, was kept not by regular soldiers, but by burghers, with spears, or swords, in their hands. The first whom they passed said to the priest, in a half whispered tone, "Holds our purpose?"

"It holds," replied the Priest of Saint Paul's. —"Benedicite!"

"*Deo Gratias!*" replied the armed citizen, and continued his walk upon the battlements.

The other sentinels seemed to avoid them: for they disappeared when they came near, or passed them without looking, or seeming to observe them. At last their walk brought them to an ancient turret, which raised its head above the wall, and in which there was a small door opening from the battlement. It was in a corner, distinct from and uncommanded by any of the angles of the fortification. In a well-guarded fortress, such a point ought to have had a sentinel for its special protection, but no one was there upon duty.

"Now mark me," said the priest, "for your father's life, and, it may be, that of many a man besides, depends upon your attention, and no less upon your dispatch.—You can run?—you can leap?"

"I feel no weariness, father, since you freed me," answered Arthur; "and the dun deer that I have often chased shall not beat me in such a wager."

"Observe then," replied the Black Priest of St Paul's, "this turret contains a staircase, which descends to a small sally-port. I will give you entrance to it—The sally-port is barred on the inside, but not locked. It will give you access to the moat, which is almost entirely dry. On crossing it, you will find yourself in the circuit of the outer barriers. You may see sentinels, but they will not see you—speak not to them, but make your way over the palisade as you can. I trust you can climb over an undefended rampart?"

"I have surmounted a defended one," said Arthur. "What is my next charge?—All this is easy."

"You will see a species of thicket, or stretch of low bushes—make for it with all speed. When you are there, turn to the eastward; but beware, while holding that course, that you are not seen by the Burgundian Free Companions, who are on watch on that part of the walls. A volley of arrows, and the sally of a body of cavalry in pursuit, will be the consequence, if they get sight of you; and their eyes are those of the eagle, that spy the carnage afar off."

"I will be heedful," said the young Englishman.

"You will find," continued the priest, "upon the outer side of the thicket a path, or rather a sheep-track, which, sweeping at some distance from the walls, will conduct you at last into the road leading from La Ferette to Bâle. Hasten forward to meet the Swiss, who are advancing. Tell them your father's hours are counted, and that they must press on if they would save him; and say to Rudolf Donnerhugel, in especial, that the Black Priest of Saint Paul's waits to bestow upon him his blessing at

the northern sally-port. Dost thou understand me?"

"Perfectly," answered the young man.

The Priest of Saint Paul's then pushed open the low-browed gate of the turret, and Arthur was about to precipitate himself down the stair which opened before him.

"Stay yet a moment," said the priest, "and doff the novice's habit, which can only encumber thee."

Arthur in a trice threw it from him, and was again about to start.

"Stay yet a moment longer," continued the Black Priest. "This gown may be a tell-tale—Stay, therefore, and help me to pull off my upper garment."

Inwardly glowing with impatience, Arthur yet saw the necessity of obeying his guide; and when he had pulled the long and loose upper vestment from the old man, he stood before him in a cassock of black serge, befitting his order and profession, but begirt, not with a suitable sash such as clergymen wear, but with a most uncanonical buff-belt, supporting a short two-

edged sword, calculated alike to stab and to smite.

"Give me now the novice's habit," said the venerable father, "and over that I will put the priestly vestment. Since for the present I have some tokens of the laity about me, it is fitting it should be covered with a double portion of the clerical habit."

As he spoke thus he smiled grimly; and his smile had something more frightful and withering than the stern frown, which suited better with his features, and was their usual expression.

"And now," said he, "what does the fool tarry for, when life and death are in his speed?"

The young messenger waited not a second hint, but at once descended the stairs, as if it had been by a single step, found the portal, as the priest had said, only secured by bars on the inside, offering little resistance save from their rusted state, which made it difficult to draw them. Arthur succeeded, however, and found himself at the side of the moat, which presented a green and marshy appearance. With-

out stopping to examine whether it was deep or shallow, and almost without being sensible of the tenacity of the morass, the young Englishman forced his way through it, and attained the opposite side, without attracting the attention of two worthy burghers of La Ferette, who were the guardians of the barriers. One of them indeed was deeply employed in the perusal of some profane chronicle, or religious legend; the other was as anxiously engaged in examining the margin of the moat, in search of eels, perhaps, or frogs, for he wore over his shoulder a scrip for securing some such booty.

Seeing that, as the priest foretold, he had nothing to apprehend from the vigilance of the sentinels, Arthur dashed at the palisade, in hope to catch hold of the top of the stockade, and so to clear it by one bold leap. He overrated his powers of activity, however, or they were diminished by his recent bonds and imprisonment. He fell lightly backward on the ground, and, as he got to his feet, became aware of the presence of a soldier, in yellow and blue, the livery of De Hagenbach, who came running towards him,

crying to the slothful and unobservant sentinels, "Alarm!—alarm!—you lazy swine! Stop the dog, or you are both dead men."

The fisherman, who was on the further side, laid down his eel-spear, drew his sword, and, flourishing it over his head, advanced towards Philipson with very moderate haste. The student was yet more unfortunate, for, in his hurry to fold up his book and attend to his duty, he contrived to throw himself (inadvertently, doubtless) full in the soldier's way. The latter, who was running at top speed, encountered the burgher with a severe shock which threw both down; but the citizen being a solid and substantial man, lay still where he fell, while the other, less weighty, and probably less prepared for the collision, lost his balance and the command of his limbs at once, and, rolling over the edge of the moat, was immersed in the mud and marsh. The fisher and the student went with deliberate speed to assist the unexpected and unwelcome partner of their watch; while Arthur, stimulated by the imminent sense of danger, sprung at the barrier with more address and vigour than

before, and, succeeding in his leap, made, as he had been directed, with his utmost speed for the covert of the adjacent bushes. He reached them without hearing any alarm from the walls. But he was conscious that his situation had become extremely precarious, since his escape from the town was known to one man at least, who would not fail to give the alarm in case he was able to extricate himself from the marsh,—a feat, however, in which it seemed to Arthur that the armed citizens were likely to prove rather his apparent than actual assistants. While such thoughts shot across his mind, they served to augment his natural speed of foot, so that in less space than could have been thought possible, he reached the thinner extremity of the thicket, whence, as intimated by the Black Priest, he could see the eastern tower and the adjoining battlements of the town,—

"With hostile faces throng'd, and fiery arms."

It required, at the same time, some address on the part of the fugitive, to keep so much under shelter as to prevent himself from being seen in his turn by those whom he saw so plainly. He

therefore expected every moment to hear a bugle wind, or to behold that bustle and commotion among the defenders, which might prognosticate a sally. Neither, however, took place, and heedfully observing the footpath, or track, which the priest had pointed out to him, young Philipson wheeled his course out of sight of the guarded towers, and soon falling into the public and frequented road, by which his father and he had approached the town in the morning, he had the happiness, by the dust and flash of arms, to see a small body of armed men advancing towards La Ferette, whom he justly concluded to be the van of the Swiss deputation.

He soon met the party, which consisted of about ten men, with Rudolf Donnerhugel at their head. The figure of Philipson, covered with mud, and in some places stained with blood, (for his fall in the dungeon had cost him a slight wound,) attracted the wonder of every one, who crowded around to hear the news. Rudolf alone appeared unmoved. Like the visage on the ancient statues of Hercules, the physiognomy of the bulky Bernese was large and

massive, having an air of indifferent and almost sullen composure, which did not change but in moments of the fiercest agitation.

He listened without emotion to the breathless tale of Arthur Philipson, that his father was in prison, and adjudged to death.

"And what else did you expect?" said the Bernese, coldly. "Were you not warned? It had been easy to have foreseen the misfortune, but it may be impossible to prevent it."

"I own—I own," said Arthur, wringing his hands, "that you were wise, and that we were foolish.—But oh! do not think of our folly in the moment of our extremity! Be the gallant and generous champion which your Cantons proclaim you—give us your aid in this deadly strait!"

"But how, or in what manner?" said Rudolf, still hesitating. "We have dismissed the Bâlese, who were willing to have given assistance, so much did your dutiful example weigh with us. We are now scarce above a score of men—how can you ask us to attack a garrison

town, secured by fortifications, and where there are six times our number?"

"You have friends within the fortifications," replied Arthur—"I am sure you have. Hark in your ear—The Black Priest sent to you—to you, Rudolf Donnerhugel of Berne—that he waits to give you his blessing at the northern sally-port."

"Ay, doubtless," said Rudolf, shaking himself free of Arthur's attempt to engage him in private conference, and speaking so that all around might hear him, "there is little doubt on't; I will find a priest at the northern sally-port to confess and absolve me, and a block, axe, and headsman, to strike my throat asunder when he has done. But I will scarce put the neck of my father's son into such risk. If they assassinate an English pedlar, who has never offended them, what will they do with the Bear of Berne, whose fangs and talons Archibald de Hagenbach has felt e'er now?"

Young Philipson at these words clasped his hands together, and held them up to Heaven, as one who abandons hope, excepting from

thence. The tears started to his eyes, and, clenching his hands and setting his teeth, he turned his back abruptly upon the Swiss.

"What means this passion?" said Rudolf. "Whither would you now?"

"To rescue my father, or perish with him," said Arthur; and was about to run wildly back to La Ferette, when a strong but kindly grasp detained him.

"Tarry a little till I tie my garter," said Sigismund Biederman, "and I will go with you, King Arthur."

"You? oaf!" exclaimed Rudolf, "you?—and without orders?"

"Why, look you, cousin Rudolf," said the youth, continuing, with great composure, to fasten his garter, which, after the fashion of the time, was somewhat intricately secured—"you are always telling us that we are Swiss and freemen; and what is the advantage of being a freeman, if one is not free to do what he has a mind? You are my Hauptman, look you, so long as it pleases me, and no longer."

"And why shouldst thou desert me now,

thou fool? Why at this minute, of all other minutes in the year?" demanded the Bernese.

"Look you," replied the insubordinate follower, "I have hunted with Arthur for this month past, and I love him—he never called me fool or idiot, because my thoughts came slower, maybe, than those of other folk. And I love his father—the old man gave me this baldrick and this horn, which I warrant cost many a kreutzer. He told me, too, not to be discouraged, for that it was better to think justly than to think fast, and that I had sense enough for the one if not for the other. And the kind old man is now in Hagenbach's butcher-shambles!—But we will free him, Arthur, if two men may. Thou shalt see me fight, while steel blade and ashen shaft will hold together."

So saying, he shook in the air his enormous partisan, which quivered in his grasp like a slip of willow. Indeed, if Iniquity was to be struck down like an ox, there was not one in that chosen band more likely to perform the feat than Sigismund; for though somewhat shorter in stature than his brethren, and of a less ani-

mated spirit, yet his breadth of shoulders and strength of muscles were enormous, and if thoroughly aroused and disposed for the contest, which was very rarely the case, perhaps Rudolf himself might, as far as sheer force went, have had difficulty in matching him.

Truth of sentiment, and energy of expression, always produce an effect on natural and generous characters. Several of the youths around began to exclaim, that Sigismund said well; that if the old man had put himself in danger, it was because he thought more of the success of their negotiation than of his own safety, and had taken himself from under their protection, rather than involve them in quarrels on his account. "We are the more bound," they said, "to see him unscathed; and we will do so."

"Peace! all you wiseacres," said Rudolf, looking round with an air of superiority; "and you, Arthur of England, pass on to the Landamman, who is close behind; you know he is our chief commander, he is no less your father's sincere friend, and whatever he may determine

in your father's favour, you will find most ready executors of his pleasure in all of us."

His companions appeared to concur in this advice, and young Philipson saw that his own compliance with the recommendation was indispensable. Indeed, although he still suspected that the Bernese, by his various intrigues, as well with the Swiss youth as with those of Bâle, and, as might be inferred from the Priest of Saint Paul's, by communication even within the town of La Ferette, possessed the greater power of assisting him at such a conjuncture; yet he trusted far more in the simple candour and perfect faith of Arnold Biederman, and pressed forward to tell to him his mournful tale, and crave his assistance.

From the top of a bank which he reached in a few minutes after he parted from Rudolf and the advanced guard, he saw beneath him the venerable Landamman and his associates, attended by a few of the youths, who no longer were dispersed upon the flanks of the party, but attended on them closely, and in military ar-

ray, as men prepared to repel any sudden attack.

Behind came a mule or two with baggage, with the well-known animals which, in the ordinary course of their march, supported Anne of Geierstein and her attendant. Both were occupied by female figures as usual, and to the best of Arthur's ken, the foremost had the well-known dress of Anne, from the grey mantle to a small heron's plume, which, since entering Germany, she had worn in compliance with the custom of the country, and in evidence of her rank as a maiden of birth and distinction. Yet, if the youth's eyes brought him true tidings at present, what was the character of their former information, when, scarce more than half an hour since, they had beheld, in the subterranean dungeon of La Ferette, the same form which they now rested upon, in circumstances so very different! The feeling excited by this thought was powerful, but it was momentary, like the lightning which blazes through a midnight sky, which is but just seen ere it vanishes into darkness. Or rather, the wonder excited by this

marvellous incident, only maintained its ground in his thoughts, by allying itself with the anxiety for his father's safety, which was their predominant occupation.

"If there be indeed a spirit," he said, "which wears that beautiful form, it must be beneficent as well as lovely, and will extend to my far more deserving father the protection which his son has twice experienced."

But ere he had time to prosecute such a thought farther, he had met the Landamman and his party. Here his appearance and his condition excited the same surprise as they had formerly occasioned to Rudolf and the vanguard. To the repeated interrogatories of the Landamman, he gave a brief account of his own imprisonment, and of his escape, of which he suffered the whole glory to rest with the Black Priest of St Paul's, without mentioning one word of the more interesting female apparition, by which he had been attended and assisted in his charitable task. On another point also Arthur was silent. He saw no propriety in communicating to Arnold Biederman the message which the priest

had addressed to Rudolf's ear alone. Whether good should come of it or no, he held sacred the obligation of silence imposed upon him by a man from whom he had just received the most important assistance.

The Landamman was struck dumb for a moment, with sorrow and surprise, at the news which he heard. The elder Philipson had gained his respect, as well by the purity and steadiness of the principles which he expressed, as by the extent and depth of his information, which was peculiarly valuable and interesting to the Switzer, who felt his admirable judgment considerably fettered for want of that knowledge of countries, times, and manners, with which his English friend often supplied him.

"Let us press forward," he said to the Banneret of Berne and the other deputies; "let us offer our mediation betwixt the tyrant De Hagenbach and our friend, whose life is in danger. He must listen to us, for I know his master expects to see this Philipson at his court. The old man hinted to me so much. As we are pos-

sessed of such a secret, Archibald de Hagenbach will not dare to brave our vengeance, since we might easily send to Duke Charles information how the Governor of La Ferette abuses his power, in matters where not only the Swiss, but where the Duke himself is concerned."

"Under your reverend favour, my worthy sir," answered the Banneret of Berne, "we are Swiss Deputies, and go to represent the injuries of Switzerland alone. If we embroil ourselves with the quarrels of strangers, we shall find it more difficult to settle advantageously those of our own country; and if the Duke should, by this villainy done upon English merchants, bring upon him the resentment of the English monarch, such breach will only render it more a matter of peremptory necessity for him to make a treaty advantageous to the Swiss Cantons."

There was so much worldly policy in this advice, that Adam Zimmerman of Soleure instantly expressed his assent, with the additional argument, that their brother Biederman had told them scarce two hours before, how these

English merchants had, by his advice and their own free desire, parted company with them that morning, on purpose that they might not involve the Deputies in the quarrels which might be raised by the Governor's exactions on his merchandise.

"Now what advantage," he said, "shall we derive from this same parting of company, supposing, as my brother seems to urge, we are still to consider this Englishman's interest as if he were our fellow-traveller, and under our especial protection?"

This personal reasoning pinched the Landamman somewhat closely, for he had but a short while before descanted on the generosity of the elder Philipson, who had freely exposed himself to danger, rather than that he should embarrass their negotiation by remaining one of their company; and it completely shook the fealty of the white-bearded Nicolas Bonstetten, whose eyes wandered from the face of Zimmerman, which expressed triumphant confidence in his argument, to that of his friend the Landamman, which was rather more embarrassed than usual.

"Brethren," said Arnold at length, with firmness and animation, "I erred in priding myself upon the worldly policy which I taught to you this morning. This man is not of our country, doubtless, but he is of our blood,—a copy of the common Creator's image,—and the more worthy of being called so, as he is a man of integrity and worth. We might not, without grievous sin, pass such a person, being in danger, without affording him relief, even if he lay accidentally by the side of our path; much less should we abandon him if the danger has been incurred in our own cause, and that we might escape the net in which he is himself caught. Be not, therefore, downcast—We do God's will in succouring an oppressed man. If we succeed by mild means, as I trust we shall, we do a good action at a cheap rate;—if not, God can assert the cause of humanity by the hands of few as well as of many."

"If such is your opinion," said the Bannerman of Berne, "not a man here will shrink from you. For me, I pleaded against my own inclinations when I advised you to avoid a breach

with the Burgundian. But as a soldier, I must needs say, I would rather fight the garrison, were they double the number they talk of, in a fair field, than undertake to storm their defences."

"Nay," said the Landamman, "I sincerely hope we shall both enter and depart from the town of La Ferette, without deviating from the pacific character with which our mission from the Diet invests us."

CHAPTER IV.

For Somerset, off with his guilty head!
3d Part of Henry VI.

The Governor of La Ferette stood on the battlements of the eastern entrance-tower of that fortress, and looked out on the road to Bâle, when first the vanguard of the Swiss mission, then the centre and rear, appeared in the distance. At the same moment the van halting, the main-body closed with it, while the females and baggage, and mules in the rear, moved in their turn up to the main-body, and the whole were united in one group.

A messenger then stepped forth, and winded one of those tremendous horns, the spoils of the

wild-bulls, so numerous in the Canton of Uri, that they are supposed to have given rise to its name.

"They demand admittance," said the esquire.

"They shall have it," answered Sir Archibald de Hagenbach. "Marry, how they may pass out again, is another and a deeper question."

"Think yet a moment, noble sir," continued the esquire. "Bethink you, these Switzers are very fiends in fight, and have, besides, no booty to repay the conquest,—some paltry chains of good copper, perchance, or adulterated silver. You have knocked out the marrow—do not damage your teeth by trying to grind the bone."

"Thou art a fool, Kilian," answered De Hagenbach, "and it may be a coward besides. The approach of some score, or at most some score and a half, of Swiss partisans, makes thee draw in thy horns like a snail at a child's finger! Mine are strong and inflexible as those of the Urus, of whom they talk so much, and on which they blow so boldly. Keep in mind,

thou timid creature, that if the Swiss deputies, as they presume to call themselves, are permitted to pass free, they carry to the Duke stories of merchants bound to his court, and fraught with precious commodities, specially addressed to his Grace! Charles has then at once to endure the presence of the ambassadors, whom he contemns and hates, and learns by them that the Governor of La Ferette, permitting such to pass, has nevertheless presumed to stop those whom he would full gladly see; for what prince would not blithely welcome such a casket as that which we have taken from yonder strolling English pedlar?"

"I see not how the assault on these ambassadors will mend your excellency's plea for despoiling the Englishmen," said Kilian.

"Because thou art a blind mole, Kilian," answered his chief. "If Burgundy hears of a ruffle between my garrison and the mountain churls, whom he scorns, and yet hates, it will drown all notice of the two pedlars who have perished in the fray. If after-inquiry should come, an hour's ride transports me with my

confidents into the Imperial dominions, where, though the Emperor be a spiritless fool, the rich prize I have found on these islanders will ensure me a good reception."

"I will stick by your excellency to the last," returned the esquire; "and you shall yourself witness, that if a fool, I am at least no coward."

"I never thought thee such when it came to hand-blows," said De Hagenbach; "but in policy, thou art timid and irresolute. Hand me mine armour, Kilian, and beware thou brace it well. The Swiss pikes and swords are no wasp stings."

"May your excellency wear it with honour and profit," said Kilian; and, according to the duty of his office, he buckled upon his principal the complete panoply of a knight of the empire. "Your purpose of assaulting the Swiss then holds firm," said Kilian. "But what pretext will your excellency assign?"

"Let me alone," said Archibald de Hagenbach, "to take one, or to make one. Do you only have Schonfeldt and the soldiers on their stations. And remember the words are—'Bur-

gundy to the Rescue.' When these words are first spoken, let the soldiers show themselves,—when repeated, let them fall on. And now that I am accoutred, away to the churls and admit them."

Kilian bowed and withdrew.

The bugle of the Switzers had repeatedly emitted its angry roar, exasperated by the delay of nearly half an hour, without an answer from the guarded gate of La Ferette; and every blast declared, by the prolonged echoes which it awakened, the increased impatience of those who summoned the town. At length the portcullis arose, the gate opened, the drawbridge fell, and Kilian, in the equipage of a man-at-arms arrayed for fight, rode forth on an ambling palfrey.

"What bold men are ye, sirs, who are here in arms before the fortress of La Ferette, appertaining in right and seignorie to the thrice noble Duke of Burgundy and Lorraine, and garrisoned for his cause and interest by the excellent Sir Archibald, Lord of Hagenbach, Knight of the most holy Roman Empire?"

"So please you, Sir Esquire," said the Lan-

damman, " for such I conjecture you to be by the feather in your bonnet, we are here with no hostile intentions; though armed, as you see, to defend us in a perilous journey, where we are something unsafe by day, and cannot always repose by night in places of security. But our arms have no offensive purpose; if they had such, our numbers had not been so few as you see them."

" What then is your character and purpose?" said Kilian, who had learned to use, in his master's absence, the lordly and insolent tone of the Governor himself.

" We are Delegates," answered the Landamman, in a calm and even tone of voice, without appearing to take offence at, or to observe, the insolent demeanour of the esquire, " from the Free and Confederated Cantons of the Swiss states and provinces, and from the good town of Soleure, who are accredited from our Diet of Legislature to travel to the presence of his Grace the Duke of Burgundy, on an errand of high importance to both countries, and with the hope of establishing with

your master's lord—I mean with the noble Duke of Burgundy—a sure and steadfast peace, upon such terms as shall be to the mutual honour and advantage of both countries, and to avert disputes, and the effusion of Christian blood, which may otherwise be shed for want of timely and good understanding."

"Show me your letters of credence," said the esquire.

"Under your forgiveness, Sir Esquire," replied the Landamman, "it will be time enough to exhibit these, when we are admitted to the presence of your master the Governor."

"That is as much as to say, wilful will to it. It is well, my masters; and yet you may take this advice from Kilian of Kersberg, It is sometimes better to reel backwards than to run forwards.—My master, and my master's master, are more ticklish persons than the dealers of Bâle, to whom you sell your cheeses. Home! honest men, home! your way lies before you, and you are fairly warned."

"We thank thee for thy counsel," said the Landamman, interrupting the Banneret of

Berne, who had commenced an angry reply, "supposing it kindly meant; if not, an uncivil jest is like an overcharged gun, which recoils on the cannoneer. Our road lies onward through La Ferette, and onward we propose to go, and take such hap as that which we may find before us."

"Go onward then, in the devil's name," said the squire, who had entertained some hope of deterring them from pursuing their journey, but found himself effectually foiled.

The Switzers entered the town, and, stopped by the barricade of cars which the Governor had formed across the street, at about twenty yards from the gate, they drew themselves up in military order, with their little body formed into three lines, the two females and the fathers of the deputation being in the centre. The little phalanx presented a double front, one to each side of the street, while the centre line faced so as to move forward, and only waited for the removal of the barricade in order to do so. But while they stood thus inactive, a knight in complete armour appeared from a side door of the

great tower, under the arch of which they had entered into the town. His visor was raised, and he walked along the front of the little line formed by the Swiss, with a stern and frowning aspect.

" Who are you," he said, " who have thus far intruded yourselves in arms into a Burgundian garrison?"

" With your excellency's leave," said the Landamman, " we are men who come on a peaceful errand, though we carry arms for our own defence. Deputies we are from the towns of Berne and Soleure, the Cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, come to adjust matters of importance with the gracious Duke of Burgundy and Lorraine."

" What towns, what cantons?" said the Governor of La Ferette. " I have heard no such names among the Free Cities of Germany. —Berne, truly! when became Berne a free state?"

" Since the twenty-first day of June," said Arnold Biederman, " in the year of grace one

thousand three hundred and thirty-nine, on which the battle of Laupen was fought."

"Away, vain old man," said the Knight; "thinkest thou that such idle boasts can avail thee here? We have heard, indeed, of some nsurgent villages and communities among the Alps, and how they rebelled against the Emperor, and by the advantage of fastnesses, ambuscades, and lurking places, how they have murdered some knights and gentlemen sent against them by the Duke of Austria; but we little thought that such paltry townships and insignificant bands of mutineers had the insolence to term themselves Free States, and propose to enter into negotiation as such with a mighty prince like Charles of Burgundy."

"May it please your excellency," replied the Landamman, with perfect temper, "your own laws of chivalry declare, that if the stronger wrong the weaker, or the noble does injury to the less gentle, the very act levels distinctions between them, and the doer of an injury becomes bound to give condign satisfaction, of such kind as the wronged party shall demand."

"Hence to thy hills, churl!" exclaimed the haughty Knight; "there comb thy beard and roast thy chestnuts. What! because a few rats and mice find retreat among the walls and wainscoting of our dwelling houses, shall we therefore allow them to intrude their disgusting presence, and their airs of freedom and independence, into our personal presence? No, we will rather crush them beneath the heel of our iron-shod boots."

"We are not men to be trodden on," said Arnold Biederman, calmly; "those who have attempted it have found us stumbling blocks. Lay, Sir Knight, aside for an instant this haughty language, which can only lead to warfare, and listen to the words of peace. Dismiss our comrade, the English merchant Philipson, on whom you have this morning laid unlawful hands; let him pay a moderate sum for his ransom, and we, who are bound instantly to the Duke's presence, will bear a fair report to him of his Governor of La Ferette."

"You will be so generous, will you!" said Sir Archibald, in a tone of ridicule. "And

what pledge shall I have that you will favour me so kindly as you propose?"

"The word of a man who never broke his promise," answered the stoical Landamman.

"Insolent hind!" replied the Knight, "dost thou stipulate? thou offer thy paltry word as a pledge betwixt the Duke of Burgundy and Archibald de Hagenbach? Know that ye go not to Burgundy at all, or you go thither with fetters on your hands and halters round your necks.—So ho, Burgundy to the Rescue!"

Instantly as he spoke, the soldiers showed themselves before, behind, and around the narrow space where the Swiss had drawn themselves up. The battlements of the town were lined with men, others presented themselves at the doors of each house in the street, prepared to sally, and, at the windows, prepared to shoot, as well with guns as with bows and cross-bows. The soldiers who defended the barricade also started up, and seemed ready to dispute the passage in front. The little band, encompassed and overmatched, but neither startled nor disheartened, stood to their arms. The centre

rank under the Landamman prepared to force their way over the barricade. The two fronts stood back to back, ready to dispute the street with those that should issue from the houses. It could not fail to prove a work of no small blood and toil to subdue this handful of determined men, even with five times their number. Some sense of this, perhaps, made Sir Archibald delay giving the signal for onset, when suddenly behind arose a cry of, "Treason, treason!"

A soldier, covered with mud, rushed before the Governor, and said, in hurried accents, that as he endeavoured to stop a prisoner who had made his escape some short time since, he had been seized by the burghers of the town, and well-nigh drowned in the moat. He added, that the citizens were even now admitting the enemy into the place.

"Kilian," said the Knight, "take two score of men—hasten to the northern sally-port; stab, cut down, or throw from the battlements, whomsoever you meet in arms, townsmen or stran-

gers. Leave me to settle with these peasants by fair means or foul."

But ere Kilian could obey his master's commands, a shout arose in the rear, where they cried, "Bâle! Bâle!—Freedom! freedom!—The day is our own!"

Onward came the youth of Bâle, who had not been at such a distance but that Rudolf had contrived to recall them—onward came many Swiss who had hovered around the embassy, holding themselves in readiness for such a piece of service; and onward came the armed citizens of La Ferette, who, compelled to take arms and mount guard by the tyranny of De Hagenbach, had availed themselves of the opportunity to admit the Bâlese at the sally-port through which Philipson had lately made his escape.

The garrison, somewhat discouraged before by the firm aspect of the Swiss, who had held their numbers at defiance, were totally disconcerted by this new and unexpected insurrection. Most of them prepared rather to fly than to fight, and they threw themselves in numbers from the walls, as the best chance of escaping.

Kilian and some others, whom pride prevented from flying, and despair from asking quarter, fought with fury, and were killed on the spot. In the midst of this confusion the Landamman kept his own bands unmoved, permitting them to take no share in the action, save to repel such violence as was offered to them.

"Stand fast all!" sounded the deep voice of Arnold Biederman along their little body. "Where is Rudolf?—Save lives, but take none. —Why, how now, Arthur Philipson! stand fast, I say."

"I cannot stand fast," said Arthur, who was in the act of leaving the ranks. "I must seek my father in the dungeons; they may be slaying him in this confusion while I stand idle here."

"By Our Lady of Ensiedlein, you say well," answered the Landamman; "that I should have forgot my noble guest! I will help thee to search for him, Arthur—the affray seems wellnigh ended.—Ho there, Sir Banneret, worthy Adam Zimmerman, my good friend Nicholas Bonstetten,

keep our men standing firm—Have nothing to do with this affray, but leave the men of Bâle to answer their own deeds. I return in a few minutes."

So saying, he hurried after Arthur Philipson, whose recollection conducted him, with sufficient accuracy, to the head of the dungeon stairs. There they met an ill-looking man clad in a buff jerkin, who bore at his girdle a bunch of rusted keys, which intimated the nature of his calling.

"Show me the prison of the English merchant," said Arthur Philipson, "or thou diest by my hand."

"Which of them desire you to see?" answered the official;—"the old man, or the young one?"

"The old," said young Philipson. "His son has escaped thee."

"Enter here then, gentlemen," said the jailor, undoing the spring-bolt of a heavy door.

At the upper end of the apartment lay the man they came to seek for, who was instantly

raised from the ground, and loaded with their embraces.

"My dear father!"—"My worthy guest!" said his son and friend at the same moment, "how fares it with you?"

"Well," answered the elder Philipson, "if you, my friend, and son, come, as I judge from your arms and countenances, as conquerors, and at liberty—ill, if you come to share my prison-house."

"Have no fear of that," said the Landamman; "we have been in danger, but are remarkably delivered.—Your evil lair has benumbed you. Lean on me, my noble guest, and let me assist you to better quarters."

Here he was interrupted by a heavy clash, as it seemed, of iron, and differing from the distant roar of the popular tumult, which they still heard from the open street, as men hear the deep voice of a remote and tempestuous ocean.

"By Saint Peter of the fetters!" said Arthur, who instantly discovered the cause of the sound, "the jailor has cast the door to the staple,

or it has escaped his grasp. The spring-lock has closed upon us, and we cannot be liberated saving from the outside.—Ho, jailor dog! villain! open the door, or thou diest!"

"He is probably out of hearing of your threats," said the elder Philipson, "and your cries avail you nothing. But are you sure the Swiss are in possession of the town?"

"We are peaceful occupants of it," answered the Landamman, "though without a blow given on our side."

"Why, then," said the Englishman, "your followers will soon find you out. Arthur and I are paltry ciphers, and our absence might easily pass over unobserved; but you are too important a figure not to be missed and looked after, when the sum of your number is taken."

"I well hope it will prove so," said the Landamman, "though methinks I show but scurvily, shut up here like a cat in a cupboard when he has been stealing cream.—Arthur, my brave boy, dost thou see no means of shooting back the bolt?"

Arthur, who had been minutely examining

the lock, replied in the negative; and added, that they must take patience perforce, and arm themselves to wait calmly their deliverance, which they could do nothing to accelerate.

Arnold Biederman, however, felt somewhat severely the neglect of his sons and companions. "All my youths, uncertain whether I am alive or dead, are taking the opportunity of my absence, doubtless, for pillage and license—and the politic Rudolf, I presume, cares not if I should never reappear on the stage—the Banneret, and the white-bearded fool Bonstetten, who calls me his friend—every neighbour has deserted me—and yet they know that I am anxious for the safety of the most insignificant of them all, as dearer to me than my own. By heavens! it looks like stratagem; and shows as if the rash young men desired to get rid of a rule too regular and peaceful, to be pleasing to those who are eager for war and conquest."

The Landamman, fretted out of his usual serenity of temper, and afraid of the misbehaviour of his countrymen in his absence, thus reflected

upon his friends and companions, while the distant noise soon died away into the most absolute and total silence.

"What is to do now?" said Arthur Philipson. "I trust they will take the opportunity of quiet to go through their roll-call, and inquire then who are amissing."

It seemed as if the young man's wish had some efficacy, for he had scarce uttered it before the lock was turned, and the door set ajar by some one who escaped up stairs from behind it, before those who were set at liberty could obtain a glance of their deliverer.

"It is the jailor, doubtless," said the Landamman, "who may be apprehensive, as he has some reason, that we might prove more incensed at our detention in the dungeon, than grateful for our deliverance."

As they spoke thus they ascended the narrow stairs, and issued from the door of the Gatehouse tower, where a singular spectacle awaited them. The Swiss Deputies, and their escort, still remained standing fast and firm on the very

spot where Hagenbach had proposed to assail them. A few of the late Governor's soldiers, disarmed, and cowering from the rage of a multitude of the citizens, who now filled the streets, stood with downcast looks behind the phalanx of the mountaineers, as their safest place of retreat. But this was not all.

The cars, so lately placed to obstruct the passage of the street, were now joined together, and served to support a platform, or scaffold, which had been hastily constructed of planks. On this was placed a chair, in which sat a tall man, with his head, neck, and shoulders bare, the rest of his body clothed in bright armour. His countenance was as pale as death, yet young Philipson recognised the hard-hearted Governor, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach. He appeared to be bound to the chair. On his right, and close beside him, stood the Priest of Saint Paul's, muttering prayers, with his breviary in his hand; while on his left, and somewhat behind the captive, appeared a tall man, attired in red, and leaning with both hands on the naked sword, which has been described on a former

occasion. The instant that Arnold Biederman appeared, and before the Landamman could open his lips to demand the meaning of what he saw, the priest drew back; the executioner stepped forward, the sword was brandished, the blow was struck, and the victim's head rolled on the scaffold. A general acclamation and clapping of hands, like that by which a crowded theatre approves of some well-graced performer, followed this feat of dexterity. While the headless corpse shot streams from the arteries, which were drunk up by the saw-dust that strewed the scaffold, the executioner gracefully presented himself alternately at the four corners of the stage, modestly bowing, as the multitude greeted him with cheers of approbation.

"Nobles, knights, gentlemen of free-born blood, and good citizens," he said, "who have assisted at this act of high justice, I pray you to bear me witness that this judgment hath been executed after the form of the sentence, at one blow, and without stroke missed or repeated."

The acclamations were reiteraed.

"Long live our Scharfgerichter Steinernherz, and many a tyrant may he do his duty on!"

"Noble friends," said the executioner, with the deepest obeisance, "I have yet another word to say, and it must be a proud one.—God be gracious to the soul of this good and noble knight, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach. He was the patron of my youth, and my guide to the path of honour. Eight steps have I made towards freedom and nobility on the heads of free-born knights and nobles, who have fallen by his authority and command; and the ninth, by which I have attained it, is upon his own, in grateful memory of which I will expend this purse of gold, which but an hour since he bestowed on me, in masses for his soul. Gentlemen, noble friends, and now my equals, La Ferette has lost a nobleman and gained one. Our Lady be gracious to the departed knight, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach, and bless and prosper the progress of Stephen Steinernherz von Blutsacker, now free and noble of right!"

With that he took the feather out of the cap of the deceased, which, soiled with the blood of

the wearer, lay near his body upon the scaffold, and, putting it into his own official bonnet, received the homage of the crowd in loud huzzas, which were partly in earnest, partly in ridicule of such an unusual transformation.

Arnold Biederman at length found breath, which the extremity of surprise had at first denied him. Indeed, the whole execution had passed much too rapidly for the possibility of his interference.

"Who has dared to act this tragedy?" he said indignantly; "And by what right has it taken place?"

A cavalier, richly dressed in blue, replied to the question—

"The free citizens of Bâle have acted for themselves, as the fathers of Swiss liberty set them an example; and the tyrant, De Hagenbach, has fallen by the same right which put to death the tyrant Geysler. We bore with him till his cup was brimming over, and then we bear no longer."

"I say not but that he deserved death," re-

plied the Landamman; "but for your own sake and for ours, you should have forborne him till the Duke's pleasure was known."

"What tell you us of the Duke?" answered Laurenz Neipperg, the same blue cavalier whom Arthur had seen at the secret rendezvous of the Bâlese youth, in company with Rudolf. "Why talk you of Burgundy to us, who are none of his subjects? The Emperor, our only rightful lord, had no title to pawn the town and fortifications of La Ferette, being as it is a dependency of Bâle, to the prejudice of our free city. He might have pledged the revenue indeed; and supposing him to have done so, the debt has been paid twice over by the exactions levied by yonder oppressor, who has now received his due. But pass on, Landamman of Unterwalden. If our actions displease you, abjure them at the footstool of the Duke of Burgundy; but, in doing so, abjure the memory of William Tell, and Stauffacher, of Furst, and Melchtal, the fathers of Swiss freedom."

"You speak truth," said the Landamman; "but it is in an ill-chosen and unhappy time.

Patience would have remedied your evils, which none felt more deeply, or would have redressed more willingly, than I. But O, imprudent young man! you have thrown aside the modesty of your age, and the subjection you owe to your elders. William Tell and his brethren were men of years and judgment, husbands and fathers, having a right to be heard in council, and to be foremost in action. Enough—I leave it with the fathers and senators of your own city, to acknowledge or to reprove your actions.—But you, my friends,—you, Banneret of Berne,—you, Rudolf,—above all, you, Nicholas Bonstetten, my comrade and my friend, why did you not take this miserable man under your protection? The action would have shown Burgundy, that we were slandered by those who have declared us desirous of seeking a quarrel with him, or of inciting his subjects to revolt. Now, all these prejudices will be confirmed in the minds of men, naturally more tenacious of evil impressions than of those which are favourable."

"As I live by bread, good gossip and neighbour," answered Nicholas Bonstetten, "I thought

to obey your injunctions to a tittle; so much so, that I once thought of breaking in and protecting the man, when Rudolf Donnerhugel reminded me, that your last orders were, to stand firm, and let the men of Bâle answer for their own actions; and surely, said I to myself, my gossip Arnold knows better than all of us what is fitting to be done."

"Ah, Rudolf, Rudolf," said the Landamman, looking on him with a displeased countenance, "wert thou not ashamed thus to deceive an old man?"

"To say I deceived him is a hard charge; but from you, Landamman," answered the Bernese, with his usual deference, "I can bear any thing. I will only say, that, being a member of this embassy, I am obliged to think, and to give my opinion as such, especially when he is not present who is wise enough to lead and direct us all."

"Thy words are always fair, Rudolf," replied Arnold Biederman, "and I trust so is thy meaning. Yet there are times when I somewhat doubt it.—But let disputes pass, and

let me have your advice, my friends; and for that purpose go we where it may best profit us, even to the church, where we will first return our thanks for our deliverance from assassination, and then hold counsel what next is to be done."

The Landamman led the way, accordingly, to the church of St Paul's, while his companions and associates followed in their order. This gave Rudolf, who, as youngest, suffered the others to precede him, an opportunity to beckon to him the Landamman's eldest son, Rudiger, and whisper to him to get rid of the two English merchants.

"Away with them, my dear Rudiger, by fair means, if possible; but away with them directly. Thy father is besotted with these two English pedlars, and will listen to no other counsel; and thou and I know, dearest Rudiger, that such men as these are unfit to give laws to free-born Switzers. Get the trumpery they have been robbed of, or as much of it as is extant, together as fast as thou canst, and send them a-travelling in Heaven's name."

Rudiger nodded intelligently, and went to offer his services to expedite the departure of the elder Philipson. He found the sagacious merchant as desirous to escape from the scene of confusion now presented in the town, as the young Swiss could be to urge his departure. He only waited to recover the casket of which De Hagenbach had possessed himself, and Rudiger Biederman set on foot a strict search after it, which was the more likely to be successful, that the simplicity of the Swiss prevented them from setting the true value upon its contents. A strict and hasty search was immediately instituted, both on the person of the dead De Hagenbach, on which the precious packet was not to be found, and on all who had approached him at his execution, or were supposed to enjoy his confidence.

Young Arthur Philipson would gladly have availed himself of a few moments to bid farewell to Anne of Geierstein. But the grey wimple was no longer seen in the ranks of the Switzers, and it was reasonable to think, that, in the confusion which followed the execution

of De Hagenbach, and the retreat of the leaders of the little battalion, she had made her retreat into some of the adjacent houses, while the soldiers around her, no longer restrained by the presence of their chiefs, had dispersed, some to search for the goods of which the Englishmen had been despoiled, others doubtless to mingle with and join in the rejoicings of the victorious youths of Bâle, and of those burghers of La Ferette by whom the fortifications of the town had been so gently surrendered.

The cry amongst them was universal, that La Ferette, so long considered as the curb of the Swiss confederates, and the barrier against their commerce, should henceforth be garrisoned, as their protection against the encroachments and exactions of the Duke of Burgundy and his officers. The whole town was in a wild but joyful jubilee, while the citizens vied with each other in offering to the Swiss every species of refreshment, and the youths who attended upon the mission hurried gaily, and in triumph, to profit by the circumstances, which had so unexpectedly converted the ambuscade so treache-

rously laid for them, into a genial and joyous reception.

Amid this scene of confusion, it was impossible for Arthur to quit his father, even to satisfy the feelings which disposed him to wish for a few moments at his own disposal. Sad, thoughtful, and sorrowful, amid the general joy, he remained with the parent whom he had so much reason to love and honour, to assist him in securing and placing on their mule the various packages and bales which the honest Switzers had recovered after the death of De Hagenbach, and which they emulated each other in bringing to their rightful owner; while they were with difficulty prevailed on to accept the guerdon which the Englishman, from the means which he had still left upon his person, was disposed not merely to offer, but to force upon the restorers of his property, and which, in their rude and simple ideas, seemed greatly to exceed the value of what they had recovered for him.

This scene had scarcely lasted ten or fifteen minutes, when Rudolf Donnerhugel approach-

ed the elder Philipson, and in a tone of great courtesy invited him to join the council of the Chiefs of the Embassy of the Swiss Cantons, who, he said, were desirous of having the advantage of his experience upon some important questions respecting their conduct on these unexpected occurrences.

"See to our affairs, Arthur, and stir not from the spot on which I leave you," said Philipson to his son. "Look especially after the sealed packet of which I was so infamously and illegally robbed; its recovery is of the utmost consequence."

So speaking, he instantly prepared himself to attend the Bernese, who, in a confidential manner, whispered, as he went arm-in-arm with him towards the church of St Paul's,—

"I think a man of your wisdom will scarce advise us to trust ourselves to the mood of the Duke of Burgundy, when he has received such an injury as the loss of this fortress, and the execution of his officer. You, at least, would be too judicious to afford us any farther the advantage of your company and society, since to do

so would be wilfully to engage in our shipwreck."

"I will give my best advice," answered Philipson, "when I shall be more particularly acquainted with the circumstances under which it is asked of me."

Rudolf muttered an oath, or angry exclamation, and led Philipson to the church without farther argument.

In a small chapel adjoining to the church, and dedicated to St Magnus the Martyr, the four deputies were assembled in close conclave, around the shrine in which the sainted hero stood, armed as when he lived. The priest of St Paul's was also present, and seemed to interest himself deeply in the debate which was taking place. When Philipson entered, all were for a moment silent, until the Landamman addressed him thus:—"Signior Philipson, we esteem you a man far travelled, well versed in the manners of foreign lands, and acquainted with the conditions of this Duke Charles of Burgundy; you are therefore fit to advise us in a matter of great weight. You know with

what anxiety we go on this mission for peace with the Duke; you also know what has this day happened, which may probably be represented to Charles in the worst colours;—would you advise us, in such a case, to proceed to the Duke's presence, with the odium of this action attached to us; or should we do better to return home, and prepare for war with Burgundy?"

"How do your own opinions stand on the subject?" said the cautious Englishman.

"We are divided," answered the Banneret of Berne.—"I have borne the banner of Berne against her foes for thirty years; I am more willing to carry it against the lances of the knights of Hainault and Lorraine, than to undergo the rude treatment which we must look to meet at the footstool of the Duke."

"We put our heads in the lion's mouth if we go forward," said Zimmerman of Soleure;—"my opinion is, that we draw back."

"I would not advise retreat," said Rudolf Donnerhugel, "were my life alone concerned; but the Landamman of Unterwalden is the father of the United Cantons, and it would be

parricide if I consented to put his life in peril. My advice is, that we return, and that the Confederacy stand on their defence."

"My opinion is different," said Arnold Biederman; "nor will I forgive any man, who, whether in sincere or feigned friendship, places my poor life in the scale with the advantage of the Cantons. If we go forward, we risk our heads—be it so. But if we turn back, we involve our country in war with a power of the first magnitude in Europe. Worthy citizens! you are brave in fight,—show your fortitude as boldly now; and let us not hesitate to incur such personal danger as may attend ourselves, if by doing so we can gain a chance of peace for our country."

"I think and vote with my neighbour and gossip, Arnold Biederman," said the laconic deputy from Schwitz.

"You hear how we are divided in opinion," said the Landamman to Philipson; "What is your opinion?"

"I would first ask of you," said the Englishman, "what has been your part in this

storming of a town occupied by the Duke's forces, and putting to death his Governor?"

"So help me, Heaven!" said the Landamman, "as I knew not of any purpose of storming the town until it unexpectedly took place."

"And for the execution of De Hagenbach," said the Black Priest, "I swear to you, stranger, by my holy order, that it took place under the direction of a competent court, whose sentence Charles of Burgundy himself is bound to respect, and whose proceedings the deputies of the Swiss mission could neither have advanced nor retarded."

"If such be the case, and if you can really prove yourselves free of these proceedings," answered Philipson, "which must needs be highly resented by the Duke of Burgundy, I would advise you by all means to proceed upon your journey; with the certainty that you will obtain from that prince a just and impartial hearing, and it may be a favourable answer. I know Charles of Burgundy; I may even say that, our different ranks and walks of life considered, I know him well. He will be deeply incensed by

the first tidings of what has here chanced, which he will no doubt interpret to your disfavour. But if, in the course of investigation, you are able to clear yourselves of these foul imputations, a sense of his own injustice may perhaps turn the balance in your favour, and in that case, he will rush from the excess of censure into that of indulgence. But your cause must be firmly stated to the Duke, by some tongue better acquainted with the language of courts than yours; and such a friendly interpreter might I have proved to you, had I not been plundered of the valuable packet which I bore with me in order to present to the Duke, and in testimony of my commission to him."

"A paltry fetch," whispered Donnerhugel to the Banneret, "that the trader may obtain from us satisfaction for the goods of which he has been plundered."

The Landamman himself was perhaps for a moment of the same opinion.

"Merchant," he said, "we hold ourselves bound to make good to you,—that is, if our

substance can effect it,—whatever loss you may have sustained, trusting to our protection."

"Ay, that we will," said the old man of Schwitz, "should it cost us twenty zecchins to make it good."

"To your guarantee of immunity I can have no claim," said Philipson, "seeing I parted company with you before I sustained any loss. And I regret the loss, not so much for its value, although that is greater than you may fancy; but chiefly because, that the contents of the casket I bore being a token betwixt a person of considerable importance and the Duke of Burgundy, I shall not, I fear, now that I am deprived of them, receive from his grace that credence which I desire, both for my own sake and yours. Without them, and speaking only in the person of a private traveller, I may not take upon me, as I might have done, when using the names of the persons whose mandates I carried."

"This important packet," said the Landamman, "shall be most rigorously sought for, and carefully redelivered to thee. For ourselves, not a Swiss of us knows the value of its con-

tents; so that if they are in the hands of any of our men, they will be returned of course as baubles, upon which they set no value."

As he spoke, there was a knocking at the door of the chapel. Rudolf, who stood nearest to it, having held some communication with those without, observed with a smile, which he instantly repressed, lest it had given offence to Arnold Biederman,—"It is Sigismund, the good youth—Shall I admit him to our council?"

"To what purpose, poor simple lad?" said his father, with a sorrowful smile.

"Yet let me undo the door," said Philipson; "he is anxious to enter, and perhaps he brings news. I have observed, Landamman, that the young man, though with slowness of ideas and expression, is strong in his principles, and sometimes happy in his conceptions."

He admitted Sigismund accordingly; while Arnold Biederman felt, on the one hand, the soothing compliment which Philipson had paid to a boy, certainly the dullest of his family, and, on the other, feared some public display of his son's infirmity, or lack of understanding. Si-

gismund, however, seemed all confidence; and he certainly had reason to be so, since, as the shortest mode of explanation, he presented to Philipson the necklace of diamonds, with the casket in which it had been deposited.

"This pretty thing is yours," he said. "I understand so much from your son Arthur, who tells me you will be glad to have it again."

"Most cordially do I thank you," said the merchant. "The necklace is certainly mine; that is, the packet of which it formed the contents was under my charge; and it is at this moment of greater additional value to me than even its actual worth, since it serves as my pledge and token for the performance of an important mission.—And how, my young friend," he continued, addressing Sigismund, "have you been so fortunate as to recover what we have sought for hitherto in vain? Let me return my best acknowledgments; and do not think me over-curious if I ask how it reached you?"

"For that matter," said Sigismund, "the story is soon told. I had planted myself as near the scaffold as I could, having never beheld an

execution before; and I observed the executioner, who I thought did his duty very cleverly, just in the moment that he spread a cloth over the body of De Hagenbach, snatch something from the dead man's bosom, and huddle it hastily into his own; so, when the rumour arose that an article of value was amissing, I hurried in quest of the fellow. I found he had bespoke masses to the extent of a hundred crowns at the high altar of St Paul's; and I traced him to the tavern of the village, where some ill-looking men were joyously drinking to him as a free citizen and a nobleman. So I stepped in amongst them with my partisan, and demanded of his lordship either to surrender to me what he had thus possessed himself of, or to try the weight of the weapon I carried. His lordship, my Lord Hangman, hesitated, and was about to make a brawl. But I was something peremptory, and so he judged it best to give me the parcel, which I trust you, Signior Philipson, will find safe and entire as it was taken from you. And—and—I left them to conclude their festivities—and that is the whole of the story."

"Thou art a brave lad," said Philipson; "and with a heart always right, the head can seldom be far wrong. But the church shall not lose its dues, and I take it on myself, ere I leave La Ferette, to pay for the masses which the man had ordered for the sake of De Hagenbach's soul, snatched from the world so unexpectedly."

Sigismund was about to reply; but Philipson, fearing he might bring out some foolery to diminish the sense which his father had so joyously entertained of his late conduct, immediately added, "Hie away, my good youth, and give to my son Arthur this precious casket."

With simple exultation at receiving applause, to which he was little accustomed, Sigismund took his leave, and the council were once more left to their own privacy.

There was a moment's silence; for the Landamman could not overcome the feeling of exquisite pleasure at the sagacity which poor Sigismund, whose general conduct warranted no such expectations, had displayed on the present occasion. It was not, however, a feeling to

which circumstances permitted him to give vent, and he reserved it for his own secret enjoyment, as a solace to the anxiety which he had hitherto entertained concerning the limited intellect of this simple-minded young man. When he spoke, it was to Philipson, with the usual candour and manliness of his character.

"Signior Philipson," he said, "we will hold you bound by no offer which you made while these glittering matters were out of your possession; because a man may often think, that if he were in such and such a situation, he would be able to achieve certain ends, which, that position being attained, he may find himself unable to accomplish. But I now ask you, whether, having thus fortunately and unexpectedly regained possession of what you say will give you certain credence with the Duke of Burgundy, you conceive yourself entitled to mediate with him on our behalf, as you formerly proposed?"

All bent forward to hear the merchant's answer.

"Landamman," he replied, "I never spoke

the word in difficulty which I was not ready to redeem when that difficulty was removed. You say, and I believe, that you had no concern with this storming of La Ferette. You say also, that the life of De Hagenbach was taken by a judicature over which you had no control, and exercised none—let a protocol be drawn up, averring these circumstances, and, as far as possible, proving them. Intrust it to me,—under seal if you will,—and if such points be established, I will pledge my word as a—as a—as an honest man and a true-born Englishman, that the Duke of Burgundy will neither detain nor offer you any personal injury. I also hope to show to Charles strong and weighty reasons why a league of friendship betwixt Burgundy and the United Cantons of Helvetia is, on his grace's part, a wise and generous measure. But it is possible I may fail in this last point; and if I do, I shall deeply grieve for it. In warranting your safe passage to the Duke's court, and your safe return from it to your own country, I think I cannot fail. If I do, my own life, and that of my beloved and only child, shall pay the ransom for

my excess of confidence in the Duke's justice and honour."

The other deputies stood silent, and looked on the Landamman; but Rudolf Donnerhugel spoke.

"Are we then to trust our own lives, and, what is still dearer to us, that of our honoured associate Arnold Biederman, on the simple word of a foreign trader? We all know the temper of the Duke, and how vindictively and relentlessly he has ever felt towards our country and its interests. Methinks this English merchant should express the nature of his interest at the court of Burgundy more plainly, if he expects us to place such implicit reliance in it."

"That, Signior Rudolf Donnerhugel," replied the merchant, "I find myself not at liberty to do. I pry not into your secrets, whether they belong to you as a body or as individuals. My own are sacred. If I consulted my own safety merely, I should act most wisely to part company with you here. But the object of your mission is peace; and your sudden return, after what has chanced at La Ferette, will make war in-

evitable. I think I can assure you of a safe and free audience from the Duke, and I am willing, for the chance of securing the peace of Christendom, to encounter any personal peril which may attach to myself."

"Say no more, worthy Philipson," said the Landamman; "thy good faith is undoubted on our part, and ill luck is his who cannot read it written on thy manly forehead. We go forward, then, prepared to risk our own safety at the hand of a despotic prince, rather than leave undischarged the mission which our country has intrusted us with. He is but half a brave man who will risk his life only in the field of battle. There are other dangers, to front which is equally honourable; and since the weal of Switzerland demands that we should encounter them, not one of us will hesitate to take the risk."

The other members of the mission bowed in assent, and the conclave broke up to prepare for their farther entrance into Burgundy.

CHAPTER V.

> Upon the mountain's heathery side,
> The day's last lustre shone,
> And rich with many a radiant hue,
> Gleam'd gaily on the Rhine.
>
> SOUTHEY.

THE English merchant was now much consulted by the Swiss Commissioners in all their motions. He exhorted them to proceed with all dispatch on their journey, so as to carry to the Duke their own account of the affair of La Ferette, and thus anticipate all rumours less favourable to their conduct on the occasion. For this purpose Philipson recommended that the Deputies, dismissing their escort, whose arms and numbers might give umbrage and suspicion, while they were too few for defence, should themselves proceed by rapid journeys on horseback towards Dijon, or wherever the Duke might chance to be for the time.

This proposal was, however, formally resisted by the very person who had hitherto been the

most ductile of the party, and the willing echo of the Landamman's pleasure. On the present occasion, notwithstanding that Arnold Biederman declared the advice of Philipson excellent, Nicholas Bonstetten stood in absolute and insurmountable opposition; because, having hitherto trusted to his own limbs for transporting himself to and fro on all occasions, he could by no means be persuaded to commit himself to the discretion of a horse. As he was found obstinately positive on this subject, it was finally determined that the two Englishmen should press forward on their journey, with such speed as they might, and that the elder of them should make the Duke acquainted with so much as to the capture of La Ferette, as he had himself witnessed of the matter. The particulars which had attended the death of De Hagenbach, the Landamman assured him, would be sent to the Duke by a person of confidence, whose attestation on the subject could not be doubted.

This course was adopted, as Philipson expressed his confidence of getting an early and private audience with the Duke.

" My best intercession," he said, " you have a good right to reckon upon; and no one can bear more direct testimony than I can, to the ungovernable cruelty and rapacity of De Hagenbach, of which I had so nearly been the victim. But of his trial and execution, I neither know nor can tell any thing; and as Duke Charles is sure to demand why execution was done upon his officer without an appeal to his own tribunal, it will be well that you either provide me with such facts as you have to state, or send forward, at least, as speedily as possible, the evidence which you have to lay before him on that most weighty branch of the subject."

The proposal of the merchant created some visible embarrassment on the countenance of the Swiss, and it was with obvious hesitation that Arnold Biederman, having led him aside, addressed him in a whisper—

" My good friend," he said, " mysteries are in general like the hateful mists which disfigure the noblest features of nature; yet, like mists, they will sometimes intervene when we most de-

sire their absence, when we most desire to be plain and explicit. The manner of De Hagenbach's death, you saw—we will take care that the Duke is informed of the authority by which it was inflicted. This is all that I can at present tell you on the subject; and let me add, that the less you speak of it with any one, you will be the more likely to escape inconvenience."

"Worthy Landamman," said the Englishman, "I also am by nature, and from the habits of my country, a hater of mysteries. Yet, such is my firm confidence in your truth and honour, that you shall be my guide in these dark and secret transactions, even as amongst the mists and precipices of your native land, and I rest contented in either case to place unlimited confidence in your sagacity. Let me only recommend that your explanation with Charles be instant, as well as clear and candid. Such being the case, I trust my poor interest with the Duke may be reckoned for something in your favour. Here then we part, but, as I trust, soon to meet again."

The elder Philipson now rejoined his son,

whom he directed to hire horses, together with a guide, to conduct them with all speed to the presence of the Duke of Burgundy. By various inquiries in the town, and especially among the soldiers of the slain De Hagenbach, they at length learned that Charles had been of late occupied in taking possession of Lorraine, and, being now suspicious of unfriendly dispositions on the part of the Emperor of Germany, as well as of Sigismund Duke of Austria, had drawn a considerable part of his army together near Strasburg, in order to be prepared against any attempt of these princes, or of the Free Imperial Cities, which might interfere with his course of conquest. The Duke of Burgundy, at this period, well deserved his peculiar epithet of the Bold, since, surrounded by enemies, like one of the nobler animals of the chase, he yet astounded, by his stern and daring countenance, not only the princes and states we have mentioned, but even the King of France, equally powerful, and far more politic, than himself.

To his camp, therefore, the English travellers bent their way, each full of such deep and

melancholy reflection, as, perhaps, prevented his bestowing much attention on the other's state of mind. They rode as men deeply immersed in their own thoughts, and with less intercourse than had been usual betwixt them on their former journeys. The nobleness of the elder Philipson's nature, and his respect for the Landamman's probity, joined with gratitude for his hospitality, had prevented him from separating his cause from that of the Swiss deputies, nor did he now repent his generosity in adhering to them. But when he recollected the nature and importance of the personal affairs which he himself had to dispatch with a proud, imperious, and irritable prince, he could not but regret the circumstances which had involved his own particular mission, of so much consequence to himself and his friends, with that of persons likely to be so highly obnoxious to the Duke as Arnold Biederman and his companions; and, however grateful for the hospitality of Geierstein, he regretted, nevertheless, the circumstances which had obliged him to accept of it.

The thoughts of Arthur were no less anxious. He found himself anew separated from the object to which his thoughts were, almost against his own will, constantly returning. And this second separation had taken place after he had incurred an additional load of gratitude, and found new, as well as more mysterious food for his ardent imagination. How was he to reconcile the character and attributes of Anne of Geierstein, whom he had known so gentle, candid, pure, and simple, with those of the daughter of a sage, and of an elementary spirit, to whom night was as day, and an impervious dungeon the same as the open portico of a temple? Could they be identified as the same being? or, while strictly alike in shape and lineament, was the one a tenant of the earth, the other only a phantom, permitted to show itself among those of a nature in which she did not partake? Above all, must he never see her more, or receive from her own lips an explanation of the mysteries which were so awfully entwined with his recollections of her? Such were the questions which occupied the mind of the younger traveller, and prevent-

ed him from interrupting, or even observing, the reverie in which his father was plunged.

Had either of the travellers been disposed to derive amusement from the country through which their road lay, the vicinity of the Rhine was well qualified to afford it. The ground on the left bank of that noble river is indeed rather flat and tame; and the mountains of Alsace, a ridge of which sweeps along its course, do not approach so near as greatly to vary the level surface of the valley which divides them from its shores. But the broad stream itself, hurrying forward with dizzy rapidity, and rushing around the islets by which its course is interrupted, is one of the most majestic spectacles in nature. The right bank is dignified at once, and adorned, by the numerous eminences covered with wood, and interspersed with valleys, which constitute the district so well known by the name of the Black Forest, to which superstition attached so many terrors, and credulity such a variety of legends. Terrors, indeed, it had, of a real and existing character. The old castles, seen from time to time on the banks of

the river itself, or on the ravines and large brooks which flow into it, were then no picturesque ruins, rendered interesting by the stories which were told about their former inhabitants, but constituted the real and apparently impregnable strongholds of that Robber-chivalry whom we have already frequently mentioned, and of whom, since Goethe, an author born to arouse the slumbering fame of his country, has dramatized the story of Goetz of Berlichingen, we have had so many spirit-rousing tales. The danger attending the vicinity of these fortresses was only known on the right, or German bank of the Rhine, for the breadth and depth of that noble stream effectually prevented any foray of their inhabitants from reaching Alsace. The former was in possession of the Cities or Free Towns of the Empire, and thus the feudal tyranny of the German lords was chiefly exerted at the expense of their own countrymen, who, irritated and exhausted with their rapine and oppression, were compelled to erect barriers against it, of a nature as interesting and extra-

ordinary, as were the wrongs from which they endeavoured to protect themselves.

But the left bank of the river, over great part of which Charles of Burgundy exercised his authority, under various characters, was under the regular protection of the ordinary magistrates, who were supported in the discharge of their duty by large bands of mercenary soldiers. These were maintained by Charles out of his private revenue; he, as well as his rival Louis, and other princes of the period, having discovered that the feudal system gave an inconvenient degree of independence to their vassals, and thinking, of course, that it was better to substitute in its place a standing army, consisting of Free Companies, or soldiers by profession. Italy furnished most of these bands, which composed the strength of Charles's army, at least the part of it in which he most trusted.

Our travellers, therefore, pursued their way by the banks of the river, in as great a degree of security as could well be enjoyed in that violent and distracted time, until at length, the father, after having eyed for some time the per-

son whom Arthur had hired to be their guide, suddenly asked of his son, who or what the man was. Arthur replied, that he had been too eager to get a person who knew the road, and was willing to show it, to be very particular in inquiring into his station or occupation; but that he thought, from the man's appearance, he must be one of those itinerant ecclesiastics, who travel through the country with relics, pardons, and other religious trinkets, and were in general but slightly respected, excepting by the lower orders, on whom these venders of superstitious wares were often accused of practising gross deceptions.

The man's appearance was rather that of a lay devotee, or palmer, bound on his pilgrimage to different shrines, than of a mendicant friar, or questionary. He wore the hat, scrip, staff, and coarse dalmatic, somewhat like the military cloak of the modern hussar, which were used by such persons on their religious peregrinations. Saint Peter's keys, rudely shaped out of some scarlet rag of cloth, appeared on the back of his mantle, placed, as heralds say,

saltire wise. This devotee seemed a man of fifty and upwards, well-made, and stout for his age, with a cast of countenance which, though not positively ugly, was far from being well-favoured. There was shrewdness, and an alert expression in his eye and actions, which made some occasional contrast with the sanctimonious demeanour of the character he now bore. This difference betwixt his dress and physiognomy was by no means uncommon among persons of his description, many of whom embraced this mode of life, rather to indulge roving and idle habits, than from any religious call.

"Who art thou, good fellow?" said the elder Philipson; "and by what name am I to call thee while we are fellow-travellers?"

"Bartholomew, sir," said the man; "Brother Bartholomew—I might say Bartholomæus, but it does not become a poor lay brother like me to aspire to the honour of a learned termination."

"And whither does thy journey tend, good Brother Bartholomew?"

"In whichever direction your worship chooses to travel, and to require my services as guide," answered the palmer; "always premising you allow me leisure for my devotions at such holy stations as we pass on our route."

"That is, thine own journey hath no professed or pressing object or end," said the Englishman.

"None, as your worship says, peculiar," said the itinerant; "or I might rather say, that my journey, good sir, embraces so many objects, that it is matter of indifference to me which of them I accomplish first. My vow binds me for four years to travel from one shrine, or holy place, to another; but I am not directly tied to visit them by any precise rule of rotation."

"That is to say, thy vow of pilgrimage does not prevent thee from hiring thyself to wait upon travellers as their guide," replied Philipson.

"If I can unite the devotion I owe to the blessed saints whose shrines I visit, with a service rendered to a wandering fellow-creature who desires to be directed upon his journey, I

do maintain," replied Bartholomew, "that the objects are easily to be reconciled to each other."

"Especially as a little worldly profit may tend to cement the two duties together, if otherwise incompatible," said Philipson.

"It pleases your honour to say so," replied the pilgrim; "but you yourself may, if you will, derive from my good company something more than the mere knowledge of the road in which you propose to travel. I can make your journey more edifying by legends of the blessed saints whose holy relics I have visited, and pleasing, by the story of the wonderful things which I have seen and heard in my travels. I can impart to you an opportunity of providing yourself with his Holiness's pardon, not only for the sins which you have committed, but also granting you indulgence for future errors."

"These things are highly available doubtless," replied the merchant; "but, good Bartholomew, when I desire to speak of them, I apply to my father confessor, to whom I have been uniformly regular in committing the charge

of my conscience, and who must be, therefore, well acquainted with my state of mind, and best accustomed to prescribe what its case may require."

"Nevertheless," said Bartholomew, "I trust your worship is too religious a man, and too sound a Catholic, to pass any hallowed station without endeavouring to obtain some share of the benefits which it is the means of dispensing to those who are ready and willing to deserve them. More especially as all men, of whatever trade and degree, hold respect to the holy saint who patroniseth his own mystery; so I hope you, being a merchant, will not pass the Chapel of Our Lady of the Ferry, without making some fitting orison."

"Friend Bartholomew," said Philipson, "I have not heard of the shrine which you recommend to me; and as my business is pressing, it were better worth my while to make a pilgrimage hither on purpose to make mine homage at a fitter season, than to delay my journey at present. This, God willing, I will not fail to do, so that I may be held excused for delaying my

reverence till I can pay it more respectfully, and at greater leisure."

"May it please you not to be wroth," said the guide, "if I say that your behaviour in this matter is like that of a fool, who, finding a treasure by the road-side, omits to put it in his bosom and carry it along with him, proposing to return from a distance on a future day, of express purpose to fetch it."

Philipson, something astonished at the man's pertinacity, was about to answer hastily and angrily, but was prevented by the arrival of three strangers, who rode hastily up from behind them.

The foremost of these was a young female, most elegantly attired, and mounted upon a Spanish jennet, which she reined with singular grace and dexterity. She wore on her right hand such a glove as that which was used to carry hawks, and had a merlin perched upon it. Her head was covered with a montero cap, and, as was frequently the custom at the period, she wore on her face a kind of black silk vizard, which effectually concealed her fea-

tures. Notwithstanding this disguise, Arthur Philipson's heart sprung high at the appearance of these strangers, for he was at once certain he recognised the matchless form of the Swiss maiden, by whom his mind was so anxiously occupied. Her attendants were a falconer with his hunting-pole, and a female, both apparently her domestics. The elder Philipson, who had no such accuracy of recollection as his son manifested upon the occasion, saw in the fair stranger only some dame or damsel of eminence engaged in the amusement of hawking, and, in return to a brief salutation, merely asked her, with suitable courtesy, as the case demanded, whether she had spent the morning in good sport.

"Indifferent, good friend," said the lady. "I dare not fly my hawk so near the broad river, lest he should soar to the other side, and so I might lose my companion. But I reckon on finding better game when I have crossed to the other side of the ferry, which we are now approaching."

"Then your ladyship," said Bartholomew,

"will hear mass in Hans's Chapel, and pray for your success."

"I were a heathen to pass the holy place without doing so," replied the damsel.

"That, noble damsel, touches the point we were but now talking of," said the guide Bartholomew; "for know, fair mistress, that I cannot persuade this worthy gentleman how deeply the success of his enterprise is dependent upon his obtaining the blessing of Our Lady of the Ferry."

"The good man," said the young maiden, seriously, and even severely, "must know little of the Rhine. I will explain to the gentlemen the propriety of following your advice."

She then rode close to young Philipson, and spoke in Swiss, for she had hitherto used the German language, "Do not start, but hear me!" and the voice was that of Anne of Geierstein. "Do not, I say, be surprised—or at least show not your wonder—you are beset by dangers. On this road, especially, your business is known—your lives are laid in wait for. Cross

over the river at the Ferry of the Chapel, or Hans's Ferry, as it is usually termed."

Here the guide drew so near to them, that it was impossible for her to continue the conversation without being overheard. At that same moment a woodcock sprung from some bushes, and the young lady threw off her merlin in pursuit.

"Sa ho—sa ho—wo ha!" hollowed the falconer, in a note which made the thicket ring again; and away he rode in pursuit. The elder Philipson and the guide himself followed the chase eagerly with their eyes, so attractive was the love of that brave sport to men of all ranks. But the voice of the maiden was a lure, which would have summoned Arthur's attention from matters more deeply interesting.

"Cross the Rhine," she again repeated, "at the Ferry to Kirch-hoff, on the other side of the river. Take your lodgings at the Golden Fleece, where you will find a guide to Strasburg. I must stay here no longer."

So saying, the damsel raised herself in her saddle, struck her horse lightly with the loose

reins, and the mettled animal, already impatient at her delay, and the eager burst of its companions, flew forward at such a pace, as if he had meant to emulate the flight of the hawk, and of the prey he pursued. The lady and her attendants soon vanished from the sight of the travellers.

A deep silence for some time ensued, during which Arthur studied how to communicate the warning he had received, without awakening the suspicions of their guide. But the old man broke silence himself, saying to their guide, "Put your horse into more motion, I pray you, and ride onward a few yards; I would have some private conference with my son."

The guide obeyed, and, as if with the purpose of showing a mind too profoundly occupied by heavenly matters, to admit a thought concerning those of this transitory world, he thundered forth a hymn in praise of Saint Wendelin the Shepherd, in a strain so discordant, as startled every bird from every bush by which they passed. There was never a more unmelodious melody, whether sacred or profane, than

that under protection of which the elder Philipson thus conferred with his son.

"Arthur," he said, "I am much convinced that this howling hypocritical vagrant has some plot upon us; and I had wellnigh determined, that the best mode to baffle it would be to consult my own opinion, and not his, as to our places of repose, and the direction of our journey."

"Your judgment is correct, as usual," said his son. "I am well convinced of yonder man's treachery, from a whisper in which that maiden informed me that we ought to take the road to Strasburg, by the eastern side of the river, and for that purpose cross over to a place called Kirch-hoff, on the opposite bank."

"Do you advise this, Arthur?" replied his father.

"I will pledge my life for the faith of this young person," replied his son.

"What!" said his father, "because she sits her palfrey fairly, and shows a faultless shape? Such is the reasoning of a boy—and yet my own old and cautious heart feels inclined to trust her. If our secret is known in this land,

there are doubtless many who may be disposed to think they have an interest in barring my access to the Duke of Burgundy, even by the most violent means; and well you know that I should on my side hold my life equally cheap, could I discharge mine errand at the price of laying it down. I tell thee, Arthur, that my mind reproaches me for taking hitherto over little care of insuring the discharge of my commission, owing to the natural desire I had to keep thee in my company. There now lie before us two ways, both perilous and uncertain, by which we may reach the Duke's court. We may follow this guide, and take the chance of his fidelity, or we may adopt the hint of yonder damsel-errant, and cross over to the other side of the Rhine, and again repass the river at Strasburg. Both roads are perhaps equally perilous. I feel it my duty to diminish the risk of the miscarriage of my commission, by sending thee across to the right bank, while I pursue my proposed course upon the left. Thus, if one of us be intercepted, the other may es-

cape, and the important commission which he bears may be duly executed."

"Alas, my father!" said Arthur, "how is it possible for me to obey you, when by doing so I must leave you alone, to incur so many dangers, to struggle with so many difficulties, in which my aid might be at least willing, though it could only be weak? Whatever befall us in these delicate and dangerous circumstances, let us at least meet it in company."

"Arthur, my beloved son," said his father, "in parting from thee I am splitting mine own heart in twain; but the same duty which commands us to expose our bodies to death, as peremptorily orders us not to spare our most tender affections. We must part."

"Oh, then," replied his son eagerly, "let me at least prevail in one point. Do thou, my father, cross the Rhine, and let me prosecute the journey by the route originally proposed."

"And why, I pray you," answered the merchant, "should I go one of these roads in preference to the other?"

"Because," said Arthur eagerly, "I would warrant yonder maiden's faith with my life."

"Again, young man?" said his father; "and wherefore so confident in that young maiden's faith? Is it merely from the confidence which youth reposes in that which is fair and pleasing, or have you had farther acquaintance with her than the late brief conversation with her admitted?"

"Can I give you an answer?"—replied his son. "We have been long absent from lands of knights and ladies, and is it not natural that we should give to those who remind us of the honoured ties of chivalry and gentle blood, the instinctive credence which we refuse to such a poor wretch as this itinerant mountebank, who gains his existence by cheating, with false relics and forged legends, the poor peasants amongst whom he travels?"

"It is a vain imagination, Arthur," said his father; "not unbefitting, indeed, an aspirant to the honours of chivalry, who draws his ideas of life and its occurrences, from the romances of the minstrels, but too visionary for a youth who

has seen, as thou hast, how the business of this world is conducted. I tell thee, and thou wilt learn to know I say truth, that around the homely board of our host the Landamman, were ranged truer tongues, and more faithful hearts, than the *Cour plenière* of a monarch has to boast. Alas! the manly spirit of ancient faith and honour has fled even from the breast of kings and knights, where, as John of France said, it ought to continue to reside a constant inhabitant, if banished from all the rest of the world."

"Be that as it may, dearest father," replied the younger Philipson, "I pray you to be persuaded by me; and if we must part company, let it be by your taking the right bank of the Rhine, since I am persuaded it is the safest route."

"And if it be the safest," said his father, with a voice of tender reproach, "is that a reason why I should spare my own almost exhausted thread of life, and expose thine, my dear son, which has but begun its course?"

"Nay, father," answered the son with ani-

mation, "in speaking thus you do not consider the difference of our importance to the execution of the purpose which you have so long entertained, and which seems now so nigh being accomplished. Think how imperfectly I might be able to discharge it, without knowledge of the Duke's person, or credentials to gain his confidence. I might indeed repeat your words, but the circumstances would be awanting to attract the necessary faith, and of consequence, your scheme, for the success of which you have lived, and now are willing to run the risk of death, would miscarry along with me."

"You cannot shake my resolution," said the elder Philipson, "or persuade me that my life is of more importance than yours. You only remind me, that it is you, and not I, who ought to be the bearer of this token to the Duke of Burgundy. Should you be successful in reaching his court or camp, your possession of these gems will be necessary to attach credit to your mission; a purpose for which they would be less necessary to me, who can refer to other circumstances under which I might

claim credence, if it should please Heaven to leave me alone to acquit myself of this important commission, which, may Our Lady, in her mercy, forefend! Understand, therefore, that, should an opportunity occur by which you can make your way to the opposite side of the Rhine, you are to direct your journey so as again to cross to this bank at Strasburg, where you will inquire for news of me at the Flying Stag, a hostelry in that city, which you will easily discover. If you hear no tidings of me at that place, you will proceed to the Duke, and deliver to him this important packet."

Here he put into his son's hand, with as much privacy as possible, the case containing the diamond necklace.

"What else your duty calls on you to do," continued the elder Philipson, "you well know; only I conjure you, let no vain inquiries after my fate interfere with the great duty you have there to discharge. In the meantime, prepare to bid me a sudden farewell, with a heart as bold and confident as when you went before me, and courageously led the way amid the rocks and

storms of Switzerland. Heaven was above us then, as it is over us now. Adieu, my beloved Arthur! Should I wait till the moment of separation, there may be but short time to speak the fatal word, and no eye save thine own must see the tear which I now wipe away."

The painful feeling which accompanied this anticipation of their parting, was so sincere on Arthur's part, as well as that of his father, that it did not at first occur to the former, as a source of consolation, that it seemed likely he might be placed under the guidance of the singular female, the memory of whom haunted him. True it was, that the beauty of Anne of Geierstein, as well as the striking circumstances in which she had exhibited herself, had on that very morning been the principal occupation of his mind; but they were now chased from it by the predominant recollection, that he was about to be separated in a moment of danger from a father, so well deserving of his highest esteem and his fondest affection.

Meanwhile, that father dashed from his eye the tear which his devoted stoicism could not suppress, and, as if afraid of softening his re-

solution, by indulging his parental fondness, he recalled the pious Bartholomew, to demand of him how far they were from the Chapel of the Ferry.

"Little more than a mile," was the reply; and when the Englishman required further information concerning the cause of its erection, he was informed, that an old boatman and fisherman, named Hans, had long dwelt at the place, who gained a precarious livelihood by transporting travellers and merchants from one bank of the river to the other. The misfortune, however, of losing first one boat and then a second, in the deep and mighty stream, with the dread inspired in travellers by the repetition of such accidents, began to render his profession an uncertain one. Being a good Catholic, the old man's distress took a devotional turn. He began to look back on his former life, and consider by what crimes he had deserved the misfortunes which darkened the evening of his days. His remorse was chiefly excited, by the recollection that he had, on one occasion, when the passage was peculiarly stormy, refused to discharge his duty

as a ferryman, in order to transport to the other shore a priest, who bore along with him an image of the Virgin, destined for the village of Kirch-hoff, on the opposite or right bank of the Rhine. For this fault, Hans submitted to severe penance, as he was now disposed to consider as culpable his doubt of the Virgin's power of protecting herself, her priest, and the bark employed in her service; besides which, the offering of a large share of his worldly goods to the church of Kirch-hoff, expressed the truth of the old man's repentance. Neither did he ever again permit himself to interpose any delay in the journey of men of holy church; but all ranks of the clergy, from the mitred prelate to the barefooted friar, might at any time of day or night have commanded the services of him and his boat.

While prosecuting so laudable a course of life, it became at length the lot of Hans to find, on the banks of the Rhine, a small image of the Virgin thrown by the waves, which appeared to him exactly to resemble that which he had formerly ungraciously refused to carry across, when under charge of the sacristan of Kirch-hoff. He pla-

ced it in the most conspicuous part of his hut, and poured out his soul before it in devotion, anxiously inquiring for some signal by which he might discover whether he was to consider the arrival of her holy image as a pledge that his offences were forgiven. In the visions of the night, his prayers were answered, and Our Lady, assuming the form of the image, stood by his bedside, for the purpose of telling him wherefore she had come hither.

"My trusty servant," she said, "men of Belial have burned my dwelling at Kirch-hoff, spoiled my chapel, and thrown the sacred image which represents me into the swoln Rhine, which swept me downward. Now, I have resolved to dwell no longer in the neighbourhood of the profane doers of this deed, or of the cowardly vassals who dared not prevent it. I am, therefore, compelled to remove my habitation, and, in despite of the opposing current, I determined to take the shore on this side, being resolved to fix my abode with thee, my faithful servant, that the land in which thou dwellest may be blessed, as well as thou and thy household."

As the vision spoke, she seemed to wring from her tresses the water in which they had been steeped, while her disordered dress and fatigued appearance was that of one who has been buffeting with the waves.

Next morning brought intelligence, that, in one of the numerous feuds of that fierce period, Kirch-hoff had been sacked, the church destroyed, and the church treasury plundered.

In consequence of the fisherman's vision being thus remarkably confirmed, Hans entirely renounced his profession; and, leaving it to younger men to supply his place as ferryman, he converted his hut into a rustic chapel, and he himself, taking orders, attended upon the shrine as a hermit, or daily chaplain. The figure was supposed to work miracles, and the ferry became renowned from its being under the protection of the Holy Image of Our Lady, and her no less holy servant.

When Bartholomew had concluded his account of the Ferry and its Chapel, the travellers had arrived at the place itself.

CHAPTER VI.

Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they cluster,
The grapes of juice divine,
Which make the soldier's jovial courage muster;
O, blessed be the Rhine!

Drinking Song.

A COTTAGE or two on the side of the river, beside which were moored one or two fishing-boats, showed the pious Hans had successors in his profession as a boatman. The river, which at a point a little lower was restrained by a chain of islets, expanded more widely, and moved less rapidly, than when it passed these cottages, affording to the ferryman a smoother surface, and a less heavy stream to contend with, although the current was even there too strong to be borne up against, unless the river was in a tranquil state.

On the opposite bank, but a good deal lower than the hamlet which gave name to the ferry, was seated on a small eminence, screened by trees and bushes, the little town of Kirch-hoff. A skiff departing from the left bank was, even on favourable occasions, carried considerably to leeward ere it could attain the opposite side of the deep and full stream of the Rhine, so that its course was oblique towards Kirch-hoff. On the other hand, a boat departing from Kirch-hoff must have great advantage both of wind and oars, in order to land its loading or crew at the Chapel of the Ferry, unless it were under the miraculous influence which carried the image of the Virgin in that direction. The communication, therefore, from the east to the west bank, was only maintained by towing boats up the stream, to such a height on the eastern side, that the lee-way which they made during the voyage across might correspond with the point at which they desired to arrive, and enable them to attain it with ease. Hence, it naturally happened, that the passage from Alsace into Suabia being the most easy, the ferry was more used

by those who were desirous of entering Germany, than by travellers who came in an opposite direction.

When the elder Philipson had by a glance around him ascertained the situation of the ferry, he said firmly to his son,—" Begone, my dear Arthur, and do what I have commanded thee."

With a heart rent with filial anxiety, the young man obeyed, and took his solitary course towards the cottages, near which the barks were moored, which were occasionally used for fishing, as well as for the purposes of the ferry.

"Your son leaves us?" said Bartholomew to the elder Philipson.

" He does for the present," said his father, " as he has certain inquiries to make in yonder hamlet."

" If they be," answered the guide, " any matters connected with your honour's road, I laud the Saints that I can better answer your inquiries than those ignorant boors, who hardly understand your language."

" If we find that their information needs thy

commentary," said Philipson, "we will request it—meanwhile, lead on to the chapel, where my son will join us."

They moved towards the chapel, but with slow steps, each turning his looks aside to the fishing hamlet; the guide as if striving to see whether the younger traveller was returning towards them, the father anxious to descry, on the broad bosom of the Rhine, a sail unloosed, to waft his son across to that which might be considered as the safer side. But though the looks of both guide and traveller were turned in the direction of the river, their steps carried them towards the chapel, to which the inhabitants, in memory of the founder, had given the title of Hans-Chapelle.

A few trees scattered around gave an agreeable and sylvan air to the place; and the chapel, that appeared on a rising ground at some distance from the hamlet, was constructed in a style of pleasing simplicity, which corresponded with the whole scene. Its small size confirmed the tradition, that it had originally been merely the hut of a peasant; and the cross

of fir-trees, covered with bark, attested the purpose to which it was now dedicated. The chapel and all around it breathed peace and solemn tranquillity, and the deep sound of the mighty river seemed to impose silence on each human voice which might presume to mingle with its awful murmur.

When Philipson arrived in the vicinity, Bartholomew took the advantage afforded by his silence to thunder forth two stanzas to the praise of the Lady of the Ferry, and her faithful worshipper Hans, after which he broke forth into the rapturous exclamation,—" Come hither ye who fear wreck, here is your safe haven!—Come hither ye who die of thirst, here is a well of mercy open to you!—Come those who are weary and far-travelled, this is your place of refreshment!"—And more to the same purpose he might have said, but Philipson sternly imposed silence on him.

" If thy devotion were altogether true," he said, " it would be less clamorous; but it is well to do what is good in itself, even if it is a hypocrite who recommends it.—Let us enter

this holy chapel, and pray for a fortunate issue to our precarious travels."

The pardoner caught up the last words.

"Sure was I," he said, "that your worship is too well advised to pass this holy place without imploring the protection and influence of Our Lady of the Ferry. Tarry but a moment until I find the priest who serves the altar, that he may say a mass on your behalf."

Here he was interrupted by the door of the chapel suddenly opening, when an ecclesiastic appeared on the threshold. Philipson instantly knew the Priest of Saint Paul's, whom he had seen that morning at La Ferette. Bartholomew also knew him, as it would seem; for his officious hypocritical eloquence failed him in an instant, and he stood before the priest with his arms folded on his breast, like a man who waits for the sentence of condemnation.

"Villain," said the ecclesiastic, regarding the guide with a severe countenance, "dost thou lead a stranger into the houses of the Holy Saints, that thou mayst slay him, and possess thyself of his spoils? But Heaven will no longer

bear with thy perfidy. Back, thou wretch, to meet thy brother miscreants, who are hastening hitherward. Tell them thy arts were unavailing, and that the innocent stranger is under MY protection—under my protection, which those who presume to violate will meet with the reward of Archibald de Hagenbach !"

The guide stood quite motionless, while addressed by the priest in a manner equally menacing and authoritative ; and no sooner did the latter cease speaking, than, without offering a word either in justification or reply, Bartholomew turned round, and retreated at a hasty pace by the same road which had conducted the traveller to the chapel.

" And do you, worthy Englishman," continued the priest, " enter into this chapel, and perform in safety those devotions, by means of which yonder hypocrite designed to detain you until his brethren in iniquity came up.—But first, wherefore are you alone ? I trust nought evil hath befallen your young companion ?"

" My son," said Philipson, " crosses the

Rhine at yonder ferry, as we had important business to transact on the other side."

As he spoke thus, a light boat, about which two or three peasants had been for some time busy, was seen to push from the shore, and shoot into the stream, to which it was partly compelled to give way, until a sail stretched along the slender yard, and supporting the bark against the current, enabled her to stand obliquely across the river.

"Now, praise be to God!" said Philipson, who was aware that the bark he looked upon must be in the act of carrying his son beyond the reach of the dangers, by which he was himself surrounded.

"Amen!" answered the priest, echoing the pious ejaculation of the traveller. "Great reason have you to return thanks to Heaven."

"Of that I am convinced," replied Philipson; "but yet from you I hope to learn the special cause of danger from which I have escaped?"

"This is neither time nor place for such an investigation," answered the Priest of Saint

Paul's. "It is enough to say, that yonder fellow, well-known for his hypocrisy and his crimes, was present when the young Switzer, Sigismund, reclaimed from the executioner the treasure of which you were robbed by Hagenbach. Thus Bartholomew's avarice was awakened. He undertook to be your guide to Strasburg, with the criminal intent of detaining you by the way till a party came up, against whose numbers resistance would have been in vain. But his purpose has been anticipated.—And now, ere giving vent to other worldly thoughts, whether of hope or fear,—to the chapel, sir, and join in orisons to Him who hath been your aid, and to those who have interceded with him in your behalf."

Philipson entered the chapel with his guide, and joined in returning thanks to Heaven, and the tutelary power of the spot, for the escape which had been vouchsafed to him.

When this duty had been performed, Philipson intimated his purpose of resuming his journey, to which the Black Priest replied, "That far from delaying him in a place so dangerous,

he would himself accompany him for some part of the journey, since he also was bound to the presence of the Duke of Burgundy."

"You, my father!—you!" said the merchant, with some astonishment.

"And wherefore surprised?" answered the priest. "Is it so strange that one of my order should visit a prince's court? Believe me, there are but too many of them to be found there."

"I do not speak with reference to your order," answered Philipson, "but in regard of the part which you have this day acted, in abetting the execution of Archibald de Hagenbach. Know you so little of the fiery Duke of Burgundy, as to imagine you can dally with his resentment with more safety than you would pull the mane of a sleeping lion?"

"I know his mood well," said the priest; "and it is not to excuse, but to defend the death of De Hagenbach, that I go to his presence. The Duke may execute his serfs and bondsmen at his pleasure, but there is a spell upon my life which is proof to all his power. But let me retort the question—You, Sir Englishman, know-

ing the conditions of the Duke so well—you, so lately the guest and travelling companions of the most unwelcome visitors who could approach him—you, implicated, in appearance at least, in the uproar at La Ferette—what chance is there of your escaping his vengeance? and wherefore will you throw yourself wantonly within his power?"

"Worthy father," said the merchant, "let each of us, without offence to the other, keep his own secret. I have, indeed, no spell to secure me from the Duke's resentment—I have limbs to suffer torture and imprisonment, and property which may be seized and confiscated. But I have had in former days many dealings with the Duke; I may even say I have laid him under obligations, and hope my interest with him may in consequence be sufficient, not only to save me from the consequences of this day's procedure, but be of some avail to my friend the Landamman."

"But if you are in reality bound to the court of Burgundy as a merchant," said the priest, "where are the wares in which you traffic?

Have you no merchandize save that which you carry on your person? I heard of a sumpter-horse with baggage. Has yonder villain deprived you of it?"

This was a trying question to Philipson, who, anxious about the separation from his son, had given no direction whether the baggage should remain with himself, or should be transported to the other side of the Rhine. He was, therefore, taken at advantage by the priest's inquiry, to which he answered with some incoherence,—"I believe my baggage is in the hamlet—that is, unless my son has taken it across the Rhine with him."

"That we will soon learn," answered the priest.

Here a novice appeared from the vestiary of the chapel at his call, and received commands to inquire at the hamlet whether Philipson's bales, with the horse which transported them, had been left there, or ferried over along with his son.

The novice, being absent a few minutes, presently returned with the baggage-horse, which,

with its burden, Arthur, from regard to his father's accommodation, had left on the western side of the river. The priest looked on attentively, while the elder Philipson, mounting his own horse, and taking the rein of the other in his hand, bade the Black Priest adieu in these words,—"And now, father, farewell! I must pass on with my bales, since there is little wisdom in travelling with them after nightfall, else would I gladly suit my pace, with your permission, so as to share the way with you."

"If it is your obliging purpose to do so, as indeed I was about to propose," said the priest, "know I will be no stay to your journey. I have here a good horse; and Melchior, who must otherwise have gone on foot, may ride upon your sumpter-horse. I the rather propose this course, as it will be rash for you to travel by night. I can conduct you to an hostelrie about five miles off, which we may reach with sufficient day-light, and where you will be lodged safely for your reckoning."

The English merchant hesitated a moment. He had no fancy for any new companion on the

road, and although the countenance of the priest was rather handsome, considering his years, yet the expression was such as by no means invited confidence. On the contrary, there was something mysterious and gloomy which clouded his brow, though it was a lofty one, and a similar expression gleamed in his cold grey eye, and intimated severity and even harshness of disposition. But notwithstanding this repulsive circumstance, the priest had lately rendered Philipson a considerable service, by detecting the treachery of his hypocritical guide, and the merchant was not a man to be startled from his course by any imaginary prepossessions against the looks or the manners of his guide, or apprehensions of machinations against himself. He only revolved in his mind the singularity attending his destiny, which, while it was necessary for him to appear before the Duke of Burgundy in the most conciliatory manner, seemed to force upon him the adoption of companions who must needs be obnoxious to that prince; and such, he was too well aware, must be the case with the Priest of St Paul's.

Having reflected for an instant, he courteously accepted the offer of the priest to guide him to some place of rest and entertainment, which must be absolutely necessary for his horse before he reached Strasburg, even if he himself could have dispensed with it.

The party being thus arranged, the novice brought forth the priest's steed, which he mounted with grace and agility, and the neophyte, being probably the same whom Arthur had represented during his escape from La Ferette, took charge, at his master's command, of the baggage-horse of the Englishman; and crossing himself, with a humble inclination of his head, as the priest passed him, he fell into the rear, and seemed to pass the time, like the false brother Bartholomew, in telling his beads, with an earnestness which had perhaps more of affected than of real piety. The Black Priest of St Paul's, to judge by the glance which he cast upon his novice, seemed to disdain the formality of the young man's devotion. He rode upon a strong black horse, more like a warrior's charger than the ambling

palfrey of a priest, and the manner in which he managed him was entirely devoid of awkwardness and timidity. His pride, whatever was its character, was not certainly of a kind altogether professional, but had its origin in other swelling thoughts which arose in his mind, to mingle with and enhance the self-consequence of a powerful ecclesiastic.

As Philipson looked on his companion from time to time, his scrutinizing glance was returned by a haughty smile, which seemed to say, "You may gaze on my form and features, but you cannot penetrate my mystery."

The looks of Philipson, which were never known to sink before mortal man, seemed to retort, with equal haughtiness, "Nor shall you, proud priest, know that you are now in company with one whose secret is far more important than thine own can be."

At length the priest made some advance towards conversation, by allusion to the footing upon which, by a mutual understanding, they seemed to have placed their intercourse.

"We travel then," he said, "like two power-

ful enchanters, each conscious of his own high and secret purpose; each in his own chariot of clouds, and neither imparting to his companion the direction or purpose of his journey."

"Excuse me, father," answered Philipson; "I have neither asked your purpose, nor concealed my own, so far as it concerns you. I repeat, I am bound to the presence of the Duke of Burgundy, and my object, like that of any other merchant, is to dispose of my wares to advantage."

"Doubtless, it would seem so," said the Black Priest, "from the extreme attention to your merchandize, which you showed not above half an hour since, when you knew not whether your bales had crossed the river with your son, or were remaining in your own charge. Are English merchants usually so indifferent to the sources of their traffic?"

"When their lives are in danger," said Philipson, "they are sometimes negligent of their fortune."

"It is well," replied the priest, and again resumed his solitary musings; until another

half-hour's travelling brought them to a dorff, or village, which the Black Priest informed Philipson was that where he proposed to stop for the night.

"The novice," he said, "will show you the inn, which is of good reputation, and where you may lodge with safety. For me, I have to visit a penitent in this village, who desires my ghostly offices;—perhaps I may see you again this evening, perhaps not till the next morning; —at any rate, adieu for the present."

So saying, the priest stopped his horse, while the novice, coming close up to Philipson's side, conducted him onward through the narrow street of the village, whilst the windows exhibited here and there a twinkling gleam, announcing that the hour of darkness was arrived. Finally, he led the Englishman through an archway into a sort of court-yard, where there stood a car or two of a particular shape, used occasionally by women when they travel, and some other vehicles of the same kind. Here the young man threw himself from the sumpter-horse, and placing the rein in Philipson's hand, disappear-

ed in the increasing darkness, after pointing to a large but dilapidated building, along the front of which not a spark of light was to be discovered from any of the narrow and numerous windows, which were dimly visible in the twilight.

CHAPTER VII.

1st Carrier. What, ostler!—a plague on thee, hast never an eye in thy head? Canst thou not hear? An 'twere not as good a deed as drink to break the pate of thee, I am a very villain—Come, and be hanged—Hast thou no faith in thee?

Gadshill. I pray thee, lend me thy lantern, to see my gelding in the stable.

2d Carrier. Nay, soft, I pray you—I know a trick worth two of that.

Gadshill. I prithee lend me thine.

3d Carrier. Ay, when? Canst tell?—Lend thee my lantern, quotha? Marry, I'll see thee hanged first.

Henry IV.

The social spirit peculiar to the French nation had already introduced into the inns of that country the gay and cheerful character of welcome, upon which Erasmus, at a later period, dwells with strong emphasis, as a contrast to the saturnine and sullen reception which

strangers were apt to meet with at a German caravansera. Philipson was, therefore, in expectation of being received by the busy, civil, and talkative host—by the hostess and her daughter, all softness, coquetry, and glee—the smiling and supple waiter—the officious and dimpled chambermaid. The better inns in France boasted also separate rooms, where strangers could change or put in order their dress, where they might sleep without company in their bedroom, and where they could deposit their baggage in privacy and safety. But all these luxuries were as yet unknown in Germany; and in Alsace, where the scene now lies, as well as in the other dependencies of the Empire, they regarded as effeminacy every thing beyond such provisions as were absolutely necessary for the supply of the wants of travellers; and even these were coarse and indifferent, and, excepting in the article of wine, sparingly ministered.

The Englishman, finding that no one appeared at the gate, began to make his presence known by calling aloud, and finally by alight-

ing, and smiting with all his might on the doors of the hostelrie for a long time, without attracting the least attention. At length the head of a grizzled servitor was thrust out at a small window, who, in a voice which sounded like that of one displeased at the interruption, rather than hopeful of advantage from the arrival of a guest, demanded what he wanted.

"Is this an inn?" replied Philipson.

"Yes," bluntly replied the domestic, and was about to withdraw from the window, when the traveller added,—

"And if it be, can I have lodgings?"

"You may come in," was the short and dry answer.

"Send some one to take the horses," replied Philipson.

"No one is at leisure," replied this most repulsive of waiters; "you must litter down your horses yourself, in the way that likes you best."

"Where is the stable?" said the merchant, whose prudence and temper were scarce proof against this Dutch phlegm.

The fellow, who seemed as sparing of his words, as if, like the Princess in the fairy tale, he had dropped ducats with each of them, only pointed to a door in an outer building, more resembling that of a cellar than of a stable, and, as if weary of the conference, drew in his head, and shut the window sharply against the guest, as he would against an importunate beggar.

Cursing the spirit of independence which left a traveller to his own resources and exertions, Philipson, making a virtue of necessity, led the two nags towards the door pointed out as that of the stable, and was rejoiced at heart to see light glimmering through its chinks. He entered with his charge into a place very like the dungeon vault of an ancient castle, rudely fitted up with some racks and mangers. It was of considerable extent in point of length, and at the lower end two or three persons were engaged in tying up their horses, dressing them, and dispensing them their provender.

This last article was delivered by the ostler, a very old lame man, who neither put his hand to wisp or curry-comb, but sate weighing forth

hay by the pound, and counting out corn, as it seemed, by the grain, so anxiously did he bend over his task, by the aid of a blinking light enclosed within a horn lantern. He did not even turn his head at the noise which the Englishman made on entering the place with two additional horses, far less did he seem disposed to give himself the least trouble, or the stranger the smallest assistance.

In respect of cleanliness, the stable of Augeas bore no small resemblance to that of this Alsatian dorff, and it would have been an exploit worthy of Hercules to have restored it to such a state of cleanliness, as would have made it barely decent in the eyes, and tolerable to the nostrils, of the punctilious Englishman. But this was a matter which disgusted Philipson himself much more than those of his party which were principally concerned. They, *videlicet* the two horses, seeming perfectly to understand that the rule of the place was, "first come first served," hastened to occupy the empty stalls which happened to be nearest to them. In this one of them at least was disappointed, being received

by a groom with a blow across the face with a switch.

"Take that," said the fellow, "for forcing thyself into the place taken up for the horses of the Baron of Randelsheim."

Never in the course of his life had the English merchant more pain to retain possession of his temper than at that moment. Reflecting, however, on the discredit of quarrelling with such a man in such a cause, he contented himself with placing the animal, thus repulsed from the stall he had chosen, into one next to that of his companion, to which no one seemed to lay claim.

The merchant then proceeded, notwithstanding the fatigue of the day, to pay all that attention to the mute companions of his journey, which they deserve from every traveller who has any share of prudence, to say nothing of humanity. The unusual degree of trouble which Philipson took to arrange his horses, although his dress, and much more his demeanour, seemed to place him above this species of servile labour, appeared to make an impression even upon

the iron insensibility of the old ostler himself. He showed some alacrity in furnishing the traveller, who knew the business of a groom so well, with corn, straw, and hay, though in small quantity, and at exorbitant rates, which were instantly to be paid; nay, he even went as far as the door of the stable, that he might point across the court to the well, from which Philipson was obliged to fetch water with his own hands. The duties of the stable being finished, the merchant concluded that he had gained such an interest with the grim master of the horse, as to learn of him whether he might leave his bales safely in the stable.

"You may leave them if you will," said the ostler; "but touching their safety, you will do much more wisely if you take them with you, and give no temptation to any one by suffering them to pass from under your own eyes."

So saying, the man of oats closed his oracular jaws, nor could he be prevailed upon to unlock them again by any inquiry which his customer could devise.

In the course of this cold and comfortless re-

ception, Philipson recollected the necessity of supporting the character of a prudent and wary trader, which he had forgotten once before in the course of the day; and, imitating what he saw the others do, who had been, like himself, engaged in taking charge of their horses, he took up his baggage, and removed himself and his property to the inn. Here he was suffered to enter, rather than admitted, into the general or public *stubé*, or room of entertainment, which, like the ark of the patriarch, received all ranks without distinction, whether clean or unclean.

The *stubé*, or stove, of a German inn, derived its name from the great hypocaust, which is always strongly heated to secure the warmth of the apartment in which it is placed. There travellers of every age and description assembled—there their upper garments were indiscriminately hung up around the stove to dry or to air—and the guests themselves were seen employed in various acts of ablution or personal arrangement, which are generally, in mo-

dern times, referred to the privacy of the dressing-room.

The more refined feelings of the Englishman were disgusted with this scene, and he was reluctant to mingle in it. For this reason he inquired for the private retreat of the landlord himself, trusting that, by some of the arguments powerful among his tribe, he might obtain separate quarters from the crowd, and a morsel of food, to be eaten in private. A grey-haired Ganymede, to whom he put the question where the landlord was, indicated a recess behind the huge stove, where, veiling his glory in a very dark and extremely hot corner, it pleased the great man to obscure himself from vulgar gaze. There was something remarkable about this person. Short, stout, bandy-legged, and consequential, he was in these respects like many brethren of the profession in all countries. But the countenance of the host, and still more his manners, differed more from the merry host of France or England, than even the experienced Philipson was prepared to expect. He knew German customs too well to expect the sup-

pliant and serviceable qualities of the master of a French inn, or even the more blunt and frank manners of an English landlord. But such German innkeepers as he had yet seen, though indeed arbitrary and peremptory in their country fashions, yet, being humoured in these, they, like tyrants in their hours of relaxation, dealt kindly with the guests over whom their sway extended, and mitigated, by jest and jollity, the harshness of their absolute power. But this man's brow was like a tragic volume, in which you were as unlikely to find any thing of jest or amusement, as in a hermit's breviary. His answers were short, sudden, and repulsive, and the air and manner with which they were delivered was as surly as their tenor; which will appear from the following dialogue betwixt him and his guest:—

"Good host," said Philipson, in the mildest tone he could assume, "I am fatigued, and far from well—May I request to have a separate apartment, a cup of wine, and a morsel of food, in my private chamber?"

"You may," answered the landlord; but

with a look strangely at variance with the apparent acquiescence which his words naturally implied.

"Let me have such accommodation, then, with your earliest convenience."

"Soft!" replied the innkeeper. "I have said that you may request these things, but not that I would grant them. If you would insist on being served differently from others, it must be at another inn than mine."

"Well, then," said the traveller, "I will shift without supper for a night—nay, more, I will be content to pay for a supper which I do not eat, if you will cause me to be accommodated with a private apartment?"

"Signior traveller," said the innkeeper, "every one here must be accommodated as well as you, since all pay alike. Whoso comes to this house of entertainment, must eat as others eat, drink as others drink, sit at table with the rest of my guests, and go to bed when the company have done drinking."

"All this," said Philipson, humbling himself where anger would have been ridiculous,

"is highly reasonable; and I do not oppose myself to your laws or customs. But," added he, taking his purse from his girdle, "sickness craves some privilege; and when the patient is willing to pay for it, methinks the rigour of your laws may admit of some mitigation?"

"I keep an inn, Signior, and not an hospital. If you remain here, you shall be served with the same attention as others,—if you are not willing to do as others do, leave my house and seek another inn."

On receiving this decisive rebuff, Philipson gave up the contest, and retired from the *sanctum sanctorum* of his ungracious host, to await the arrival of supper, penned up like a bullock in a pound, amongst the crowded inhabitants of the *stubé*. Some of these, exhausted by fatigue, snored away the interval between their own arrival and that of the expected repast; others conversed together on the news of the country, and others again played at dice, or such games as might serve to consume the time. The company were of various ranks, from those who were apparently wealthy and well-appoint-

ed, to some whose garments and manners indicated that they were but just beyond the grasp of poverty.

A begging friar, a man apparently of a gay and pleasant temper, approached Philipson, and engaged him in conversation. The Englishman was well enough acquainted with the world to be aware, that whatever of his character and purpose it was desirable to conceal, would be best hidden under a sociable and open demeanour. He, therefore, received the friar's approaches graciously, and conversed with him upon the state of Lorraine, and the interest which the Duke of Burgundy's attempt to seize that fief into his own hands was likely to create both in France and Germany. On these subjects, satisfied with hearing his fellow-traveller's sentiments, Philipson expressed no opinion of his own, but, after receiving such intelligence as the friar chose to communicate, preferred rather to talk upon the geography of the country, the facilities afforded to commerce, and the rules which obstructed or favoured trade.

While he was thus engaged in the conversa-

tion which seemed most to belong to his profession, the landlord suddenly entered the room, and, mounting on the head of an old barrel, glanced his eye slowly and steadily round the crowded apartment, and when he had completed his survey, pronounced, in a decisive tone, the double command,—"Shut the gates—Spread the table."

"The Baron St Antonio be praised," said the friar, "our landlord has given up hope of any more guests to-night, until which blessed time we might have starved for want of food before he had relieved us. Ay, here comes the cloth, the old gates of the court-yard are now bolted fast enough, and when Ian Mengs has once said, 'Shut the gates,' the stranger may knock on the outside as long as he will, but we may rest assured that it shall not be opened to him."

"Mein-herr Mengs maintains strict discipline in his house," said the Englishman.

"As absolute as the Duke of Burgundy," answered the friar. "After ten o'clock, no ad-

mittance—the 'seek another inn,' which is before that a conditional hint, becomes, after the clock has struck, and the watchmen have begun their rounds, an absolute order of exclusion. He that is without remains without, and he that is within must, in like manner, continue there until the gates open at break of day. Till then the house is almost like a beleagured citadel, John Mengs its seneschal"——

"And we its captives, good father," said Philipson. "Well, content am I; a wise traveller must submit to the control of the leaders of the people when he travels; and I hope a goodly fat potentate, like John Mengs, will be as clement as his station and dignity admit of."

While they were talking in this manner, the aged waiter, with many a weary sigh, and many a groan, had drawn out certain boards, by which a table, that stood in the midst of the *stubé*, had the capacity of being extended, so as to contain the company present, and covered it with a cloth, which was neither distinguished by extreme cleanness nor fineness of texture.

On this table, when it had been accommodated to receive the necessary number of guests, a wooden trencher and spoon, together with a glass drinking cup, were placed before each, he being expected to serve himself with his own knife for the other purposes of the table. As for forks, they were unknown until a much later period, all the Europeans of that day making the same use of the fingers to select their morsels and transport them to the mouth, which the Asiatics now practise.

The board was no sooner arranged, than the hungry guests hastened to occupy their seats around it; for which purpose the sleepers were awakened, the dicers resigned their game, and the idlers and politicians broke off their sage debates, in order to secure their place at the supper-table, and be ready to perform their part in the interesting solemnity which seemed about to take place. But there is much between the cup and the lip, and not less sometimes between the covering of a table and the placing food upon it. The guests sat in order, each

with his knife drawn, already menacing the victuals which were still subject to the operations of the cook. They had waited, with various degrees of patience, for full half an hour, when at length the old attendant before mentioned entered with a pitcher of thin Moselle wine, so light and so sharp-tasted, that Philipson put down his cup, with every tooth in his head set on edge by the slender portion which he had swallowed. The landlord, John Mengs, who had assumed a seat somewhat elevated at the head of the table, did not omit to observe this mark of insubordination, and to animadvert upon it.

"The wine likes you not, I think, my master?" said he to the English merchant.

"For wine, no," answered Philipson; "but could I see any thing requiring such sauce, I have seldom seen better vinegar."

This jest, though uttered in the most calm and composed manner, seemed to drive the innkeeper to fury.

"Who are you," he exclaimed, "for a foreign pedlar, that ventures to quarrel with my

wine, which has been approved of by so many princes, dukes, reigning dukes, graves, rhinegraves, counts, barons, and knights of the Empire, whose shoes you are altogether unworthy even to clean? Was it not of this wine that the Count Palatine of Nimmersatt drank six quarts before he ever rose from the blessed chair in which I now sit?"

"I doubt it not, mine host," said Philipson; "nor should I think of scandalizing the sobriety of your honourable guest, even if he had drunken twice the quantity."

"Silence, thou malicious railer!" said the host; "and let instant apology be made to me, and the wine which you have calumniated, or I will instantly command the supper to be postponed till midnight."

Here there was a general alarm among the guests, all abjuring any part in the censures of Philipson, and most of them proposing that John Mengs should avenge himself on the actual culprit by turning him instantly out of doors, rather than involve so many innocent and famished per-

sons in the consequences of his guilt. The wine they pronounced excellent; some two or three even drank their glass out, to make their words good; and they all offered, if not with lives and fortunes, at least with hands and feet, to support the ban of the house against the contumacious Englishman. While petition and remonstrance were assailing John Mengs on every side, the friar, like a wise counsellor and a trusty friend, endeavoured to end the feud by advising Philipson to submit to the host's sovereignty.

"Humble thyself, my son," he said; "bend the stubbornness of thy heart before the great lord of the spigot and butt. I speak for the sake of others as well as my own; for Heaven alone knows how much longer they or I can endure this extenuating fast!"

"Worthy guests," said Philipson, "I am grieved to have offended our respected host, and am so far from objecting to the wine, that I will pay for a double flaggon of it, to be served all round to this honourable company—so, only, they do not ask me to share of it."

These last words were spoken aside; but the Englishman could not fail to perceive, from the wry mouths of some of the party who were possessed of a nicer palate, that they were as much afraid as himself of a repetition of the acid potation.

The friar next addressed the company with a proposal, that the foreign merchant, instead of being amerced in a measure of the liquor which he had scandalized, should be mulcted in an equal quantity of the more generous wines which were usually produced after the repast had been concluded. In this mine host, as well as the guests, found their advantage; and, as Philipson made no objection, the proposal was unanimously adopted, and John Mengs gave, from his seat of dignity, the signal for supper to be served.

The long-expected meal appeared, and there was twice as much time employed in consuming as there had been in expecting it. The articles of which the supper consisted, as well as the mode of serving them up, were as much calculated to try the patience of the company as the delay

which had preceded its appearance. Messes of broth and vegetables followed in succession, with platters of meat, sodden and roasted, of which each in its turn took a formal course around the ample table, and was specially subjected to every one in rotation. Black puddings, hung beef, dried fish, also made the circuit, with various condiments, called Botargo, Caviare, and similar names, composed of the roes of fish mixed with spices and the like preparations, calculated to awaken thirst and encourage deep drinking. Flaggons of wine accompanied these stimulating dainties. The liquor was so superior in flavour and strength to the ordinary wine which had awakened so much controversy, that it might be objected to on the opposite account, being so heady, fiery, and strong, that, in spite of the rebuffs which his criticism had already procured, Philipson ventured to ask for some cold water to allay it.

" You are too difficult to please, sir guest," replied the landlord, again bending upon the Englishman a stern and offended brow ; " if you find the wine too strong in my house, the

secret to allay its strength is to drink the less. It is indifferent to us whether you drink or not, so you pay the reckoning of those good fellows who do." And he laughed a gruff laugh.

Philipson was about to reply, but the friar, retaining his character of mediator, plucked him by the cloak, and entreated him to forbear. "You do not understand the ways of the place," said he; "it is not here as in the hostelries of England and France, where each guest calls for what he desires for his own use, and where he pays for what he has required, and for no more. Here we proceed on a broad principle of equality and fraternity. No one asks for any thing in particular; but such provisions as the host thinks sufficient are set down before all indiscriminately; and as with the feast, so is it with the reckoning. All pay their proportions alike, without reference to the quantity of wine which one may have swallowed more than another; and thus the sick and infirm, nay, the female and the child, pay the same as the hungry peasant and strolling *lanz-knecht*."

" It seems an unequal custom," said Philip-

son; "but travellers are not to judge. So that when a reckoning is called, every one, I am to understand, pays alike?"

"Such is the rule," said the friar,—"excepting, perhaps, some poor brother of our own order, whom Our Lady and St Francis send into such a scene as this, that good Christians may bestow their alms upon him, and so make a step on his road to Heaven."

The first words of this speech were spoken in the open and independent tone in which the friar had begun the conversation; the last sentence died away into the professional whine of mendicity proper to the convent, and at once apprised Philipson at what price he was to pay for the friar's counsel and mediation. Having thus explained the custom of the country, good Father Gratian turned to illustrate it by his example, and, having no objection to the new service of wine on account of its strength, he seemed well disposed to signalize himself amongst some stout topers, who, by drinking deeply, appeared determined to have full pennyworths for their share of the reckoning. The good wine

gradually did its office, and even the host relaxed his sullen and grim features, and smiled to see the kindling flame of hilarity catch from one to another, and at length embrace almost all the numerous guests at the table d'hôte, except a few who were too temperate to partake deeply of the wine, or too fastidious to enter into the discussions to which it gave rise. On these the host cast, from time to time, a sullen and displeased eye.

Philipson, who was reserved and silent, both in consequence of his abstinence from the wine-pot, and his unwillingness to mix in conversation with strangers, was looked upon by the landlord as a defaulter in both particulars; and as he aroused his own sluggish nature with the fiery wine, Mengs began to throw out obscure hints about kill-joy, mar-company, spoil-sport, and such like epithets, which were plainly directed against the Englishman. Philipson replied, with the utmost equanimity, that he was perfectly sensible that his spirits did not at this moment render him an agreeable member of a merry company, and that with the leave of

those present, he would withdraw to his sleeping apartment, and wish them all a good evening, and continuance to their mirth.

But this very reasonable proposal, as it might have elsewhere seemed, contained in it treason against the laws of German compotation.

"Who are you," said John Mengs, "who presume to leave the table before the reckoning is called and settled? Sapperment der teufel! we are not men upon whom such an offence is to be put with impunity! You may exhibit your polite pranks in Rams-Alley if you will, or in Eastcheap, or in Smithfield; but it shall not be in John Mengs's Golden Fleece, nor will I suffer one guest to go to bed to blink out of the reckoning, and so cheat me and all the rest of my company."

Philipson looked round, to gather the sentiments of the company, but saw no encouragement to appeal to their judgment. Indeed, many of them had little judgment left to appeal to, and those who paid any attention to the matter at all, were some quiet old soakers, who were already beginning to think of the reckon-

ing, and were disposed to agree with the host in considering the English merchant as a flincher, who was determined to evade payment of what might be drunk after he left the room; so that John Mengs received the applause of the whole company, when he concluded his triumphant denunciation against Philipson.

"Yes, sir, you may withdraw if you please; but, poz element! it shall not be for this time to seek for another inn, but to the court-yard shall you go and no further, there to make your bed upon the stable litter; and good enough for the man that will needs be the first to break up good company."

"It is well said, my jovial host," said a rich trader from Ratisbon; "and here are some six of us—more or less—who will stand by you to maintain the good old customs of Germany; and the—umph—laudable and—and praiseworthy rules of the Golden Fleece."

"Nay, be not angry, sir," said Philipson; "yourself and your three companions, whom the good wine has multiplied into six, shall have your own way of ordering the matter; and

since you will not permit me to go to bed, I trust that you will take no offence if I fall asleep in my chair."

"How say you? what think you, mine host?" said the citizen from Ratisbon; "may the gentleman, being drunk, as you see he is, since he cannot tell that three and one make six—I say, may he, being drunk, sleep in the elbow-chair?"

This question introduced a contradiction on the part of the host, who contended that three and one made four, not six; and this again produced a retort from the Ratisbon trader. Other clamours rose at the same time, and were at length with difficulty silenced by the stanzas of a chorus song of mirth and good fellowship, which the friar, now become somewhat oblivious of the rule of St Francis, thundered forth with better good-will than he ever sung a canticle of King David. Under cover of this tumult, Philipson drew himself a little aside, and though he felt it impossible to sleep, as he had proposed, was yet enabled to escape the reproachful glances with which John Mengs distinguished all those who did not call for wine

loudly, and drink it lustily. His thoughts roamed far from the *stubé* of the Golden Fleece, and upon matter very different from that which was discussed around him, when his attention was suddenly recalled by a loud and continued knocking on the door of the hostelry.

"What have we here?" said John Mengs, his nose reddening with very indignation; "who the foul fiend presses on the Golden Fleece at such an hour, as if he thundered at the door of a bordel? To the turret window some one—Geoffrey, knave ostler, or thou, old Timothy, tell the rash man there is no admittance into the Golden Fleece save at timeous hours."

The men went as they were directed, and might be heard in the *stubé* vying with each other in the positive denial which they gave to the ill-fated guest, who was pressing for admission. They returned, however, to inform their master, that they were unable to overcome the obstinacy of the stranger, who refused positively to depart until he had an interview with Mengs himself.

Wroth was the master of the Golden Fleece at this ill-omened pertinacity, and his indignation extended, like a fiery exhalation, from his nose, all over the adjacent regions of his cheeks and brow. He started from his chair, grasped in his hand a stout stick, which seemed his ordinary sceptre or leading staff of command, and muttering something concerning cudgels for the shoulders of fools, and pitchers of fair or foul water for the drenching of their ears, he marched off to the window which looked into the court, and left his guests nodding, winking, and whispering to each other, in full expectation of hearing the active demonstrations of his wrath. It happened otherwise, however; for after the exchange of a few indistinct words, they were astonished when they heard the noise of the unbolting and unbarring of the gates of the inn, and presently after the footsteps of men upon the stairs; and the landlord entering, with an appearance of clumsy courtesy, prayed those assembled to make room for an honoured guest, who came, though late, to add to their numbers. A tall dark form followed, muffled in a travelling

cloak; on laying aside which, Philipson at once recognised his late fellow-traveller, the Black Priest of St Paul's.

There was in the circumstance itself nothing at all surprising, since it was natural that a landlord, however coarse and insolent to ordinary guests, might yet show deference to an ecclesiastic, whether from his rank in the church, or from his reputation for sanctity. But what did appear surprising to Philipson, was the effect produced by the entrance of this unexpected guest. He seated himself, without hesitation, at the highest place of the board, from which John Mengs had dethroned the aforesaid trader from Ratisbon, notwithstanding his zeal for ancient German customs, his steady adherence and loyalty to the Golden Fleece, and his propensity to brimming goblets. The priest took instant and unscrupulous possession of his seat of honour, after some negligent reply to the host's unwonted courtesy; when it seemed that the effect of his long black vestments, in place of the slashed and flounced coat of his predecessor, as well as of

the cold grey eye with which he slowly reviewed the company, in some degree resembled that of the fabulous Gorgon, and if it did not literally convert those who looked upon it into stone, there was yet something petrifying in the steady unmoved glance with which he seemed to survey them, looking as if desirous of reading their very inmost souls, and passing from one to another, as if each upon whom he looked in succession was unworthy of longer consideration.

Philipson felt, in his turn, that momentary examination, in which, however, there mingled nothing that seemed to convey recognition. All the courage and composure of the Englishman could not prevent an unpleasant feeling while under this mysterious man's eye, so that he felt a relief when it passed from him and rested upon another of the company, who seemed in turn to acknowledge the chilling effects of that freezing glance. The noise of intoxicated mirth and drunken disputation, the clamorous argument, and the still more boisterous laugh, which had been suspended on the priest's entering the eat-

ing apartment, now, after one or two vain attempts to resume them, died away, as if the feast had been changed to a funeral, and the jovial guests had been at once converted into the lugubrious mutes who attend on such solemnities. One little rosy-faced man, who afterwards proved to be a tailor from Augsburg, ambitious, perhaps, of showing a degree of courage not usually supposed consistent with his effeminate trade, made a bold effort; and yet it was with a timid and restrained voice, that he called on the jovial friar to renew his song. But whether it was that he did not dare to venture on an uncanonical pastime in presence of a brother in orders, or whether he had some other reason for declining the invitation, the merry churchman hung his head, and shook it with such an expressive air of melancholy, that the tailor drew back as if he had been detected in cabbaging from a cardinal's robes, or cribbing the lace of some cope or altar gown. In short, the revel was hushed into deep silence, and so attentive were the company to what should arrive next, that the bells of the village-

church, striking the first hour after midnight, made the guests start as if they heard them rung backwards, to announce an assault or conflagration. The Black Priest, who had taken some slight and hasty repast, which the host had made no kind of objection to supplying him with, seemed to think the bells, which announced the service of lauds, being the first after midnight, a proper signal for breaking up the party.

"We have eaten," he said, "that we may support life, let us pray that we may be fit to meet death; which waits upon life as surely as night upon day, or the shadow upon the sunbeam, though we know not when or from whence it is to come upon us."

The company, as if mechanically, bent their uncovered heads, while the priest said, with his deep and solemn voice, a Latin prayer, expressing thanks to God for protection throughout the day, and entreating for its continuance during the witching hours which were to pass ere the day again commenced. The hearers bowed their heads in token of acquiescence in the holy

petition; and, when they raised them, the Black Priest of Saint Paul's had followed the host out of the apartment, probably to that which was destined for his repose. His absence was no sooner perceived, than signs, and nods, and even whispers, were exchanged between the guests; but no one spoke above his breath, or in such connected manner, as that Philipson could understand any thing distinctly from them. He himself ventured to ask the friar, who sat near him, observing at the same time the under-tone which seemed to be fashionable for the moment, whether the worthy ecclesiastic who had left them, was not the Priest of Saint Paul's, on the frontier town of La Ferette.

"And if you know it is he," said the friar, with a countenance and a tone, from which all signs of intoxication were suddenly banished, "why do you ask of me?"

"Because," said the merchant, "I would willingly learn the spell which so suddenly converted so many merry tipplers into men of sober manners, and a jovial company into a convent of Carthusian friars?"

"Friend," said the friar, "thy discourse savoureth mightily of asking after what thou knowest right well. But I am no such silly duck as to be taken by a decoy. If thou knowest the Black Priest, thou canst not be ignorant of the terrors which attend his presence, and that it were safer to pass a broad jest in the holy House of Loretto than where he shows himself."

So saying, and as if desirous of avoiding further discourse, he withdrew to a distance from Philipson.

At the same moment the landlord again appeared, and, with more of the usual manners of a publican than he had hitherto exhibited, commanded his waiter, Geoffrey, to hand round to the company a sleeping-drink, or pillow-cup of distilled water, mingled with spices, which was indeed as good as Philipson himself had ever tasted. John Mengs, in the meanwhile, with somewhat of more deference, expressed to his guests a hope that his entertainment had given satisfaction; but this was in so careless a manner, and he seemed so conscious of deserving the affirmative which was expressed on all hands,

that it became obvious there was very little humility in proposing the question. The old man, Timothy, was in the meantime mustering the guests, and marking with chalk on the bottom of a trencher the reckoning, the particulars of which were indicated by certain conventional hieroglyphics, while he showed on another the division of the sum total among the company, and proceeded to collect an equal share of it from each. When the fatal trencher, in which each man paid down his money, approached the jolly friar, his countenance seemed to be somewhat changed. He cast a piteous look towards Philipson, as the person from whom he had the most hope of relief; and our merchant, though displeased with the manner in which he had held back from his confidence, yet not unwilling in a strange country to incur a little expense, in the hope of making a useful acquaintance, discharged the mendicant's score as well as his own. The poor friar paid his thanks in many a blessing in good German and bad Latin, but the host cut them short; for, approaching Philipson with a candle in his

hand, he offered his own services to show him where he might sleep, and even had the condescension to carry his mail, or portmanteau, with his own landlordly hands.

"You take too much trouble, mine host," said the merchant, somewhat surprised at the change in the manner of John Mengs, who had hitherto contradicted him at every word.

"I cannot take too much pains for a guest," was the reply, "whom my venerable friend, the Priest of Saint Paul's, hath especially recommended to my charge."

He then opened the door of a small bedroom, prepared for the occupation of a guest, and said to Philipson,—"Here you may rest till to-morrow at what hour you will, and for as many days more as you incline. The key will secure your wares against theft or pillage of any kind. I do not this for every one; for, if my guests were every one to have a bed to himself, the next thing they would demand might be a separate table; and then there would be an end of the good old German customs, and we should be as foppish and frivolous as our neighbours."

He placed the portmanteau on the floor, and seemed about to leave the apartment, when, turning about, he began a sort of apology for the rudeness of his former behaviour.

"I trust there is no misunderstanding between us, my worthy guest. You might as well expect to see one of our bears come aloft and do tricks like a jackanapes, as one of us stubborn old Germans play the feats of a French or an Italian host. Yet I pray you to note, that if our behaviour is rude our charges are honest, and our articles what they profess to be. We do not expect to make Moselle pass for Rhenish, by dint of a bow and a grin, nor will we sauce your mess with poison, like the wily Italian, and call you all the time Illustrissimo and Magnifico."

He seemed in these words to have exhausted his rhetoric, for, when they were spoken, he turned abruptly and left the apartment.

Philipson was thus deprived of another opportunity to enquire who or what this ecclesiastic could be, that had exercised such influence on all who approached him. He felt, indeed, no desire to prolong a conference with John

Mengs, though he had laid aside in such a considerable degree his rude and repulsive manners; yet he longed to know who this man could be, who had power with a word to turn aside the daggers of Alsatian banditti, habituated as they were, like most borderers, to robbery and pillage, and to change into civility the proverbial rudeness of a German innkeeper. Such were the reflections of Philipson, as he doffed his clothes to take his much-needed repose, after a day of fatigue, danger, and difficulty, on the pallet afforded by the hospitality of the Golden Fleece, in the Rhein-Thal.

CHAPTER VIII.

Macbeth. How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags,
What is't ye do?
Witches. A deed without a name.

Macbeth.

We have said in the conclusion of the last chapter, that, after a day of unwonted fatigue and extraordinary excitation, the merchant, Philipson, naturally expected to forget so many agitating passages in that deep and profound repose, which is at once the consequence and the cure of extreme exhaustion. But he was no sooner laid on his lowly pallet, than he felt that the bodily machine, over-laboured by so much exercise, was little disposed to the charms of sleep. The mind had been too much excited, the

body was far too feverish, to suffer him to partake of needful rest. His anxiety about the safety of his son, his conjectures concerning the issue of his mission to the Duke of Burgundy, and a thousand other thoughts which recalled past events, or speculated on those which were to come, rushed upon his mind like the waves of a perturbed sea, and prevented all tendency to repose. He had been in bed about an hour, and sleep had not yet approached his couch, when he felt that the pallet on which he lay was sinking below him, and that he was in the act of descending along with it he knew not whither. The sound of ropes and pullies was also indistinctly heard, though every caution had been taken to make them run smooth; and the traveller, by feeling around him, became sensible that he and the bed on which he lay had been spread upon a large trap-door, which was capable of being let down into the vaults, or apartments beneath.

Philipson felt fear in circumstances so well qualified to produce it; for how could he hope

a safe termination to an adventure which had begun so strangely? But his apprehensions were those of a brave, ready-witted man, who, even in the extremity of danger, which appeared to surround him, preserved his presence of mind. His descent seemed to be cautiously managed, and he held himself in readiness to start to his feet and defend himself, as soon as he should be once more upon firm ground. Although somewhat advanced in years, he was a man of great personal vigour and activity, and unless taken at advantage, which no doubt was at present much to be apprehended, he was likely to make a formidable defence. His plan of resistance, however, had been anticipated. He no sooner reached the bottom of the vault, down to which he was lowered, than two men, who had been waiting there till the operation was completed, laid hands on him from either side, and forcibly preventing him from starting up as he intended, cast a rope over his arms, and made him a prisoner as effectually as when he was in the dungeons of La Ferette. He was obliged, therefore, to remain passive and unresisting, and

await the termination of this formidable adventure. Secured as he was, he could only turn his head from one side to the other; and it was with joy that he at length saw lights twinkle, but they appeared at a great distance from him.

From the irregular manner in which these scattered lights advanced, sometimes keeping a straight line, sometimes mixing and crossing each other, it might be inferred that the subterranean vault in which they appeared was of very considerable extent. Their number also increased; and as they collected more together, Philipson could perceive that the lights proceeded from many torches, borne by men muffled in black cloaks, like mourners at a funeral, or the Black Friars of Saint Francis's Order, wearing their cowls drawn over their heads, so as to conceal their features. They appeared anxiously engaged in measuring off a portion of the apartment; and, while occupied in that employment, they sung, in the ancient German language, rhymes more rude than Philipson

could well understand, but which may be imitated thus :—

Measurers of good and evil,
Bring the square, the line, the level,—
Rear the altar, dig the trench,
Blood both stone and ditch shall drench.
Cubits six, from end to end,
Must the fatal bench extend,—
Cubits six, from side to side,
Judge and culprit must divide.
On the east the Court assembles,
On the west the Accused trembles—
Answer, brethren, all and one,
Is the ritual rightly done?

A deep chorus seemed to reply to the question. Many voices joined in it, as well of persons already in the subterranean vault, as of others who as yet remained without in various galleries and passages which communicated with it, and whom Philipson now presumed to be very numerous. The answer chanted run as follows :—

On life and soul, on blood and bone,
One for all, and all for one,
We warrant this is rightly done.

The original strain was then renewed in the same manner as before—

How wears the night?—Doth morning shine
In early radiance on the Rhine?

What music floats upon his tide?
Do birds the tardy morning chide?
Brethren, look out from hill and height,
And answer true, how wears the night?

The answer was returned, though less loud than at first, and it seemed that those to whom the reply was given were at a much greater distance than before; yet the words were distinctly heard.

The night is old; on Rhine's broad breast
Glance drowsy stars which long to rest.
No beams are twinkling in the east.
There is a voice upon the flood,
The stern still call of blood for blood;
'Tis time we listen the behest.

The chorus replied, with many additional voices—

Up, then, up! When day's at rest,
'Tis time that such as we are watchers;
Rise to judgment, brethren, rise!
Vengeance knows not sleepy eyes,
He and night are matchers.

The nature of the verses soon led Philipson to comprehend that he was in presence of the Initiated, or the Wise Men; names which were applied to the celebrated judges of the Secret Tribunal, which continued at that period to sub-

sist in Swabia, Franconia, and other districts of the east of Germany, which was called, perhaps from the frightful and frequent occurrence of executions by command of those invisible judges, the Red Land. Philipson had often heard that the seat of a Free Count, or chief of the Secret Tribunal, was secretly instituted even on the left bank of the Rhine, and that it maintained itself in Alsace, with the usual tenacity of those secret societies, though Duke Charles of Burgundy had expressed a desire to discover and to discourage its influence so far as was possible, without exposing himself to danger from the thousands of poniards which that mysterious tribunal could put in activity against his own life;—an awful means of defence, which for a long time rendered it extremely hazardous for the sovereigns of Germany, and even the Emperors themselves, to put down by authority those singular associations.

So soon as this explanation flashed on the mind of Philipson, it gave some clew to the character and condition of the Black Priest of St Paul's. Supposing him to be a president,

or chief official of the secret association, there was little wonder that he should confide so much in the inviolability of his terrible office, as to propose vindicating the execution of De Hagenbach; that his presence should surprise Bartholomew, whom he had power to have judged and executed upon the spot; and that his mere appearance at supper on the preceding evening should have appalled the guests; for, though every thing about the institution, its proceedings and its officers, was preserved in as much obscurity as is now practised in free masonry, yet the secret was not so absolutely well kept as to prevent certain individuals from being guessed or hinted at as men initiated and intrusted with high authority by the Vehmegericht, or tribunal of the bounds. When such suspicion attached to an individual, his secret power, and supposed acquaintance with all guilt, however secret, which was committed within the society in which he was conversant, made him at once the dread and hatred of every one who looked on him; and he enjoyed a high degree of personal respect, on the

same terms on which it would have been yielded to a powerful enchanter, or a dreaded genie. In conversing with such a person, it was especially necessary to abstain from all questions alluding, however remotely, to the office which he bore in the Secret Tribunal; and indeed, to testify the least curiosity upon a subject so solemn and mysterious, was sure to occasion some misfortune to the inquisitive person.

All these things rushed at once upon the mind of the Englishman, who felt that he had fallen into the hands of an unsparing tribunal, whose proceedings were so much dreaded by those who resided within the circle of their power, that the friendless stranger must stand a poor chance of receiving justice at their hands, whatever might be his consciousness of innocence. While Philipson made this melancholy reflection, he resolved, at the same time, not to forsake his own cause, but defend himself as he best might; conscious as he was that these terrible and irresponsible judges were nevertheless governed by certain rules of right and wrong,

which formed a check on the rigours of their extraordinary code.

He lay, therefore, devising the best means of obviating the present danger, while the persons whom he beheld glimmered before him, less like distinct and individual forms, than like the phantoms of a fever, or the phantasmagoria with which a disease of the optic nerves has been known to people a sick man's chamber. At length they assembled in the centre of the apartment where they had first appeared, and seemed to arrange themselves into form and order. A great number of black torches were successively lighted, and the scene became distinctly visible. In the centre of the hall, Philipson could now perceive one of the altars which are sometimes to be found in ancient subterranean chapels. But we must pause, in order briefly to describe, not the appearance only, but the nature and constitution, of this terrible court.

Behind the altar, which seemed to be the central point, on which all eyes were bent, there were placed in parallel lines two benches cover-

ed with black cloth. Each was occupied by a number of persons, who seemed assembled as judges; but those who held the foremost bench were fewer, and appeared of a rank superior to those who crowded the seat most remote from the altar. The first seemed to be all men of some consequence, priests high in their order, knights, or noblemen; and notwithstanding an appearance of equality which seemed to pervade this singular institution, much more weight was laid upon their opinion, or testimonies. They were called Free Knights, Counts, or whatever title they might bear, while the inferior class of the judges were only termed Free and worthy Burghers. For it must be observed, that the Vehmique Institution,* which was the name that it commonly bore, although its power consisted in a wide system of espionage, and the tyrannical application of force which acted upon it, was yet, (so rude were the ideas of enforcing public law,)

* The word Wehme, pronounced Vehme, is of uncertain derivation, but was always used to intimate this inquisitorial and secret Court. The members were termed Wissenden, or Initiated, answering to the modern phrase of Illuminati.

accounted to confer a privilege on the country in which it was received, and only freemen were allowed to experience its influence. Serfs and peasants could neither have a place among the Free Judges, their assessors, or assistants; for there was in this assembly even some idea of trying the culprit by his peers.

Besides the dignitaries who occupied the benches, there were others who stood around, and seemed to guard the various entrances to the hall of judgment, or, standing behind the seats on which their superiors were ranged, looked prepared to execute their commands. These were members of the order, though not of the highest ranks. Schœppen is the name generally assigned to them, signifying officials, or serjeants of the Vehmique court, whose doom they stood sworn to enforce, through good report and bad report, against their own nearest and most beloved, as well as in cases of ordinary malefactors.

The Schœppen, or Scabini, as they were termed in Latin, had another horrible duty to perform, that, namely, of denouncing to the tribunal whatever came under their observation,

that might be construed as an offence falling under its cognizance; or, in their language, a crime against the Vehme. This duty extended to the judges as well as the assistants, and was to be discharged without respect of persons; so that, to know, and wilfully conceal, the guilt of a mother or brother, inferred, on the part of the unfaithful official, the same penalty as if he himself had committed the crime which his silence screened from punishment. Such an institution could only prevail at a time when ordinary means of justice were excluded by the hand of power, and when, in order to bring the guilty to punishment, it required all the influence and authority of such a confederacy. In no other country than one exposed to every species of feudal tyranny, and deprived of every ordinary mode of obtaining justice or redress, could such a system have taken root and flourished.

We must now return to the brave Englishman, who, though feeling all the danger he encountered from so tremendous a tribunal, maintained nevertheless a dignified and unaltered composure.

The meeting being assembled, a coil of ropes, and a naked sword, the well-known signals and emblems of Vehmique authority, were deposited on the altar; where the sword, from its being usually straight, with a cross handle, was considered as representing the blessed emblem of Christian Redemption, and the cord as indicating the right of criminal jurisdiction, and capital punishment. Then the President of the meeting, who occupied the centre seat on the foremost bench, arose, and laying his hand on the symbols, pronounced aloud the formula expressive of the duty of the tribunal, which all the inferior judges and assistants repeated after him, in deep and hollow murmurs.

"I swear by the Holy Trinity, to aid and cooperate without relaxation, in the things belonging to the Holy Vehme, to defend its doctrines and institutions against father and mother, brother and sister, wife and children; against fire, water, earth, and air; against all that the sun enlightens; against all that the dew moistens; against all created things of heaven and earth, or the waters under the earth; and I swear

to give information to this holy judicature, of all that I know to be true, or hear repeated by credible testimony, which, by the rules of the Holy Vehme, is deserving of animadversion or punishment; and that I will not cloak, cover, or conceal, such my knowledge, neither for love, friendship, or family affection, nor for gold, silver, or precious stones; neither will I associate with such as are under the sentence of this Sacred Tribunal, by hinting to a culprit his danger, or advising him to his escape, or aiding and supplying him with counsel, or means to that effect; neither will I relieve such culprit with fire, clothes, food, or shelter, though my father should require from me a cup of water in the heat of summer noon, or my brother should request to sit by my fire in the bitterest cold night of winter: And further, I vow and promise to honour this holy association, and do its behests speedily, faithfully, and firmly, in preference to those of any other tribunal whatsoever—so help me God, and his holy Evangelists."

When this oath of office had been taken, the

President addressing the assembly, as men who judge in secret and punish in secret, like the Deity, desired them to say, why this "child of the cord"* lay before them, bound and helpless. An individual rose from the more remote bench, and in a voice which, though altered and agitated, Philipson conceived that he recognised, declared himself the accuser, as bound by his oath, of the child of the cord, or prisoner, who lay before them.

"Bring forward the prisoner," said the President, "duly secured, as is the order of our secret law; but not with such severity as may interrupt his attention to the proceedings of the tribunal, or limit his power of hearing and replying."

Six of the assistants immediately dragged forward the pallet and platform of boards on which Philipson lay, and advanced it towards the foot of the altar. This done, each unsheathed his dagger, while two of them unloosed the cords by which the merchant's hands were secured,

* The term *Strick-kind*, or child of the cord, was applied to the person accused before these awful assemblies.

and admonished him in a whisper, that the slightest attempt to resist or escape, would be the signal to stab him dead.

"Arise!" said the President; "listen to the charge to be preferred against you, and believe you shall in us find judges equally just and inflexible."

Philipson, carefully avoiding any gesture which might indicate a desire to escape, raised his body on the lower part of the couch, and remained seated, clothed as he was in his under-vest and *calecons*, or drawers, so as exactly to face the muffled President of the terrible court. Even in these agitating circumstances, the mind of the undaunted Englishman remained unshaken, and his eyelid did not quiver, nor his heart beat quicker, though he seemed, according to the expression of Scripture, to be a pilgrim in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, beset by numerous snares, and encompassed by total darkness, where light was most necessary for safety.

The President demanded his name, country, and occupation?

"John Philipson," was the reply; "by birth an Englishman, by profession a merchant."

"Have you ever borne any other name, and profession?" demanded the Judge.

"I have been a soldier, and, like most others, had then a name by which I was known in war."

"What was that name?"

"I laid it aside when I resigned my sword, and I do not desire again to be known by it. Moreover, I never bore it where your institutions have weight and authority," answered the Englishman.

"Know you before whom you stand?" continued the Judge.

"I may at least guess," replied the merchant.

"Tell your guess, then," continued the interrogator. "Say who we are, and wherefore are you before us?"

"I believe that I am before the Unknown, or Secret Tribunal, which is called Vehme-gericht."

"Then are you aware," answered the Judge,

"that you would be safer if you were suspended by the hair over the Abyss of Schaffhausen, or if you lay below an axe, which a thread of silk alone kept back from the fall. What have you done to deserve such a fate?"

"Let those reply by whom I am subjected to it," answered Philipson, with the same composure as before.

"Speak, accuser!" said the President, "to the four quarters of Heaven!—To the ears of the free judges of this tribunal, and the faithful executors of their doom!—And to the face of the child of the cord, who denies or conceals his guilt, make good the substance of thine accusation!"

"Most dreaded," answered the accuser, addressing the President, "this man hath entered the Sacred Territory, which is called the Red Land,—a stranger under a disguised name and profession. When he was yet on the eastern side of the Alps, at Turin, in Lombardy, and elsewhere, he at various times spoke of the Holy Tribunal in terms of hatred and contempt, and declared, that were he Duke of Burgundy, he

would not permit it to extend itself from Westphalia, or Suabia, into his dominions. Also I charge him, that, nourishing this malevolent intention against the Holy Tribunal, he who now appears before the bench as child of the cord, has intimated his intention to wait upon the court of the Duke of Burgundy, and use his influence with him, which he boasts will prove effectual to stir him up to prohibit the meetings of the holy Vehme in his dominions, and to inflict on their officers, and the executors of their mandates, the punishment due to robbers and assassins."

"This is a heavy charge, brother!" said the President of the assembly, when the accuser ceased speaking—"How do you purpose to make it good?"

"According to the tenor of those secret statutes, the perusal of which is prohibited to all but the initiated," answered the accuser.

"It is well," said the President; "but I ask thee once more, What are those means of proof?—You speak to holy and to initiated ears."

"I will prove my charge," said the accuser,

"by the confession of the party himself, and by my own oath upon the holy emblems of the Secret Judgment—that is, the steel and the cord."

"It is a legitimate offer of proof," said a member of the aristocratic bench of the assembly; "and it much concerns the safety of the system to which we are bound by such deep oaths, a system handed down to us from the most Christian and holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne, for the conversion of the heathen Saracens, and punishing such of them as revolted again to their Pagan practices, that such criminals should be looked to. This Duke Charles of Burgundy hath already crowded his army with foreigners, whom he can easily employ against this Sacred Court, more especially with English, a fierce, insular people, wedded to their own usages, and hating those of every other nation. It is not unknown to us, that the Duke hath already encouraged opposition to the officials of the Tribunal in more than one part of his German dominions; and that in consequence, instead of submitting to their doom

with reverent resignation, children of the cord have been found bold enough to resist the executioners of the Vehme, striking, wounding, and even slaying those who have received commission to put them to death. This contumacy must be put an end to; and if the accused shall be proved to be one of those by whom such doctrines are harboured and inculcated, I say let the steel and cord do their work on him."

A general murmur seemed to approve what the speaker had said; for all were conscious that the power of the Tribunal depended much more on the opinion of its being deeply and firmly rooted in the general system, than upon any regard or esteem for an institution, of which all felt the severity. It followed, that those of the members who enjoyed consequence by means of their station in the ranks of the Vehme, saw the necessity of supporting its terrors by occasional examples of severe punishment; and none could be more readily sacrificed, than an unknown and wandering foreigner. All this rushed upon Philipson's mind, but did not prevent his making a steady reply to the accusation.

"Gentlemen," he said, "good citizens, burgesses, or by whatever other name you please to be addressed, know, that in my former days I have stood in as great peril as now, and have never turned my heel to save my life. Cords and daggers are not calculated to strike terror into those who have seen swords and lances. My answer to the accusation is, that I am an Englishman, one of a nation accustomed to yield and to receive open-handed and equal justice dealt forth in the broad light of day. I am, however, a traveller, who knows that he has no right to oppose the rules and laws of other nations, because they do not resemble those of his own. But this caution can only be called for in lands, where the system about which we converse is in full force and operation. If we speak of the institutions of Germany, being at the time in France or Spain, we may without offence to the country in which they are current, dispute concerning them, as students debate upon a logical thesis in a university. The accuser objects to me, that at Turin, or elsewhere in the north of Italy, I spoke

with censure of the institution under which I am now judged. I will not deny that I remember something of the kind; but it was in consequence of the question being in a manner forced upon me by two guests, with whom I chanced to find myself at table. I was much and earnestly solicited for an opinion ere I gave one."

"And was that opinion," said the presiding Judge, "favourable or otherwise to the Holy and Secret Vehme-gericht? Let truth rule your tongue—remember, life is short, judgment is eternal."

"I would not save my life at the expense of a falsehood. My opinion was unfavourable; and I expressed myself thus:—No laws or judicial proceedings can be just or commendable, which exist and operate by means of a secret combination. I said, that justice could only live and exist in the open air, and that when she ceased to be public, she degenerated into revenge and hatred. I said, that a system, of which your own jurists have said, *non frater a fratre, non hospes a hospite, tutus*, was too much adverse to the laws of nature to be connected with or regulated by those of religion."

These words were scarcely uttered, when there burst a murmur from the Judges highly unfavourable to the prisoner,—"He blasphemes the Holy Vehme—Let his mouth be closed for ever!"

"Hear me," said the Englishman, "as you will one day wish to be yourselves heard! I say such were my sentiments, and so I expressed them—I say also, I had a right to express these opinions, whether sound or erroneous, in a neutral country, where this Tribunal neither did, nor could, claim any jurisdiction. My sentiments are still the same. I would avow them if that sword were at my bosom, or that cord around my throat. But I deny that I have ever spoken against the institutions of your Vehme, in a country where it had its course as a national mode of justice. Far more strongly, if possible, do I denounce the absurdity of the falsehood, which represents me, a wandering foreigner, as commissioned to traffic with the Duke of Burgundy about such high matters, or to form a conspiracy for the destruction of a system, to which so many seem warmly attached. I never said such a thing, and I never thought it."

"Accuser," said the presiding Judge, "thou hast heard the accused—What is thy reply?"

"The first part of the charge," said the accuser, "he hath confessed in this high presence, namely, that his foul tongue hath basely slandered our holy mysteries; for which he deserves that it should be torn out of his throat. I myself, on my oath of office, will aver, as use and law is, that the rest of the accusation, namely, that which taxes him as having entered into machinations for the destruction of the Vehmique institutions, are as true as those which he has found himself unable to deny."

"In justice," said the Englishman, "the accusation, if not made good by satisfactory proof, ought to be left to the oath of the party accused, instead of permitting the accuser to establish by his own deposition the defects in his own charge."

"Stranger," replied the presiding Judge, "we permit to thy ignorance a longer and more full defence than consists with our usual forms. Know, that the right of sitting among these venerable judges confers on the person of

him who enjoys it a sacredness of character, which ordinary men cannot attain to. The oath of one of the initiated must counterbalance the most solemn asseveration of every one that is not acquainted with our holy secrets. In the Vehmique court all must be Vehmique. The averment of the Emperor, he being uninitiated, would not have so much weight in our counsels as that of one of the meanest of these officials. The affirmation of the accuser can only be rebutted by the oath of a member of the same Tribunal, being of superior rank."

"Then, God be gracious to me, for I have no trust save in Heaven!" said the Englishman, in solemn accents. "Yet I will not fall without an effort. I call upon thee thyself, dark spirit, who presidest in this most deadly assembly—I call upon thyself, to declare on thy faith and honour, whether thou holdest me guilty of what is thus boldly averred by this false calumniator—I call upon thee by thy sacred character—by the name of——"

"Hold!" replied the presiding Judge. "The name by which we are known in open air must

not be pronounced in this subterranean judgment-seat."

He then proceeded to address the prisoner and the assembly.—"I, being called on in evidence, declare that the charge against thee is so far true as it is acknowledged by thyself, namely, that thou hast, in other lands than the Red Soil,* spoken lightly of this holy institution of justice. But I believe in my soul, and will bear witness on my honour, that the rest of the accusation is incredible and false. And this I swear, holding my hand on the dagger and the cord.—What is your judgment, my brethren, upon the case which you have investigated?"

A member of the first-seated and highest class amongst the judges, muffled like the rest, but the tone of whose voice, and the stoop of whose person, announced him to be more advanced in

* The parts of Germany subjected to the operation of the Secret Tribunal, were called, from the blood which it spilt, or from some other reason, the Red Soil. Westphalia, as the limits of that country were understood in the middle ages, which are considerably different from the present boundaries, was the principal theatre of the Vehme.

years than the other two who had before spoken, arose with difficulty, and said with a trembling voice,—

"The child of the cord who is before us, has been convicted of folly and rashness in slandering our holy institution. But he spoke his folly to ears which had never heard our sacred laws—He has, therefore, been acquitted by irrefragable testimony, of combining for the impotent purpose of undermining our power, or stirring up princes against our holy association, for which death were too light a punishment—He hath been foolish, then, but not criminal; and as the holy laws of the Vehme bear no penalty save that of death, I propose for judgment that the child of the cord be restored without injury to society, and to the upper world, having been first duly admonished of his errors."

"Child of the cord," said the presiding Judge, "thou hast heard thy sentence of acquittal. But, as thou desirest to sleep in an unbloody grave, let me warn thee, that the secrets of this night shall remain with thee, as a secret not to be communicated to father nor mother,

to spouse, son, or daughter; neither to be spoken aloud nor whispered; to be told in words or written in characters; to be carved or to be painted, or to be otherwise communicated, either directly, or by parable and emblem. Obey this behest, and thy life is in surety. Let thy heart then rejoice within thee, but let it rejoice with trembling. Never more let thy vanity persuade thee that thou art secure from the servants and Judges of the Holy Vehme. Though a thousand leagues lie between thee and the Red Land, and thou speakest in that where our power is not known; though thou shouldst be sheltered by thy native island, and defended by thy kindred ocean, yet, even there, I warn thee to cross thyself when thou dost so much as think of the Holy and Invisible Tribunal, and to retain thy thoughts within thine own bosom; for the Avenger may be beside thee, and thou mayst die in thy folly. Go hence, be wise, and let the fear of the Holy Vehme never pass from before thine eyes."

At the concluding words, all the lights were at once extinguished with a hissing noise. Phi-

lipson felt once more the grasp of the hands of the officials, to which he resigned himself as the safest course. He was gently prostrated on his pallet-bed, and transported back to the place from which he had been advanced to the foot of the altar. The cordage was again applied to the platform, and Philipson was sensible that his couch rose with him for a few moments, until a slight shock apprised him that he was again brought to a level with the floor of the chamber in which he had been lodged on the preceding night, or rather morning. He pondered over the events that had passed, in which he was sensible that he owed Heaven thanks for a great deliverance. Fatigue at length prevailed over anxiety, and he fell into a deep and profound sleep, from which he was only awakened by returning light. He resolved on an instant departure from so dangerous a spot, and without seeing any one of the household but the old ostler, pursued his journey to Strasburg, and reached that city without farther accident.

CHAPTER IX.

> Away with these ?—True Wisdom's world will be
> Within its own creation, or in thine,
> Maternal Nature ! for who teems like thee
> Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine ?
> There Harold gazes on a work divine,
> A blending of all beauties, streams, and dells—
> Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine
> And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells,
> From grey but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.
>
> *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto*

When Arthur Philipson left his father, to go on board the bark which was to waft him across the Rhine, he took but few precautions for his own subsistence, during a separation of which he calculated the duration to be very brief. Some necessary change of raiment, and a very few pieces of gold, were all which he thought it needful to withdraw from the general stock ; the rest of the baggage and money he left with the sumpter horse, which he concluded his father might need, in order to sustain his character as an English

trader. Having embarked with his horse and his slender appointments on board a fishing skiff, she instantly raised her temporary mast, spread a sail across the yard, and, supported by the force of the wind against the downward power of the current, moved across the river obliquely in the direction of Kirch-hoff, which, as we have said, lies somewhat lower on the river than Hans-Chapelle. Their passage was so favourable, that they reached the opposite side in a few minutes, but not until Arthur, whose eye and thoughts were on the left bank, had seen his father depart from the Chapel of the Ferry, accompanied by two horsemen, whom he readily concluded to be the guide Bartholomew, and some chance traveller who had joined him; but the second of whom was in truth the Black Priest of St Paul's, as has been already mentioned.

This augmentation of his father's company was, he could not but think, likely to be attended with an increase of his safety, since it was not probable he would suffer a companion to be forced upon him, and one of his own choosing

might be a protection, in case his guide should prove treacherous. At any rate, he had to rejoice that he had seen his father depart in safety from the spot where they had reason to apprehend some danger awaited him. He resolved, therefore, to make no stay at Kirch-hoff, but to pursue his way, as fast as possible, towards Strasburg, and rest, when darkness compelled him to stop, in one of the dorffs, or villages, which were situated on the German side of the Rhine. At Strasburg, he trusted, with the sanguine spirit of youth, he might again be able to rejoin his father; and if he could not altogether subdue his anxiety on their separation, he fondly nourished the hope that he might meet him in safety. After some short refreshment and repose afforded to his horse, he lost no time in proceeding on his journey down the eastern bank of the broad river.

He was now upon the most interesting side of the Rhine, walled in and repelled as the river is on that shore by the most romantic cliffs, now mantled with vegetation of the richest hue, tinged with all the variegated colours of autumn;

now surmounted by fortresses, over whose gates were displayed the pennons of their proud owners; or studded with hamlets, where the richness of the soil supplied to the poor labourer the food, of which the oppressive hand of his superior threatened altogether to deprive him. Every stream which here contributes its waters to the Rhine, winds through its own tributary dell, and each valley possesses a varying and separate character, some rich with pastures, cornfields, and vineyards, some frowning with crags and precipices, and other romantic beauties.

The principles of taste were not then explained or analysed as they have been since, in countries where leisure has been found for this investigation. But the feelings arising from so rich a landscape as is displayed by the valley of the Rhine, must have been the same in every bosom, from the period when our Englishman took his solitary journey through it, in doubt and danger, till that in which it heard the indignant Childe Harold bid a proud farewell to his native country, in the vain search of a land in which it might throb less fiercely.

Arthur enjoyed this scene, although the fading daylight began to remind him, that, alone as he was, and travelling with a very valuable charge, it would be matter of prudence to look out for some place of rest during the night. Just as he had formed the resolution of enquiring at the next habitations he should pass, which way he should follow for this purpose, the road he pursued descended into a beautiful amphitheatre filled with large trees, which protected from the heats of summer the delicate and tender herbage of the pasture. A large brook flowed through it, and joined the Rhine. At a short mile up the brook, its waters made a crescent round a steep craggy eminence, crowned with flanking walls, and Gothic towers and turrets, enclosing a feudal castle of the first order. A part of the savannah that has been mentioned, had been irregularly cultivated for wheat, which had grown a plentiful crop. It was gathered in, but the patches of deep yellow stubble contrasted with the green of the undisturbed pasture land, and with the seared and dark-red foliage of the broad oaks which

stretched their arms athwart the level space. There a lad, in a rustic dress, was employed in the task of netting a brood of partridges, with the assistance of a trained spaniel; while a young woman, who had the air rather of a domestic in some family of rank, than that of an ordinary villager, sat on the stump of a decayed tree, to watch the progress of the amusement. The spaniel, whose duty it was to drive the partridges under the net, was perceptibly disturbed at the approach of the traveller; his attention was divided, and he was obviously in danger of marring the sport, by barking and putting up the covey, when the maiden quitted her seat, and advancing towards Philipson, requested him, for courtesy, to pass at a greater distance, and not interfere with their amusement.

The traveller willingly complied with her request.

"I will ride, fair damsel," he said, "at whatever distance you please. And allow me, in guerdon, to ask, whether there is convent, castle, or good man's house, where a stranger,

who is belated and weary, might receive a night's hospitality?"

The girl, whose face he had not yet distinctly seen, seemed to suppress some desire to laugh, as she replied, "Hath not yon castle, think you," pointing to the distant towers, "some corner which might accommodate a stranger in such extremity?"

"Space enough, certainly," said Arthur; "but perhaps little inclination to grant it."

"I myself," said the girl, "being one, and a formidable part of the garrison, will be answerable for your reception. But as you parley with me in such hostile fashion, it is according to martial order that I should put down my visor."

So saying, she concealed her face under one of those riding masks, which at that period women often wore when they went abroad, whether for protecting their complexion, or screening themselves from intrusive observation. But ere she could accomplish this operation, Arthur had detected the merry countenance of Annette Veilchen, a girl who, though

her attendance on Anne of Geierstein was in a menial capacity, was held in high estimation at Geierstein. She was a bold wench, unaccustomed to the distinctions of rank, which were little regarded in the simplicity of the Helvetian hills, and she was ready to laugh, jest, and flirt with the young men of the Landamman's family. This attracted no attention, the mountain manners making little distinction between the degrees of attendant and mistress, further than that the mistress was a young woman who required help, and the maiden one who was in a situation to offer and afford it. This kind of familiarity would perhaps have been dangerous in other lands, but the simplicity of Swiss manners, and the turn of Annette's disposition, which was resolute and sensible, though rather bold and free, when compared to the manners of more civilized countries, kept all intercourse betwixt her and the young men of the family in the strict path of honour and innocence.

Arthur himself had paid considerable attention to Annette, being naturally, from his feelings towards Anne of Geierstein, heartily de-

sirous to possess the good graces of her attendant; a point which was easily gained by the attentions of a handsome young man, and the generosity with which he heaped upon her small presents of articles of dress or ornament, which the damsel, however faithful, could find no heart to refuse.

The assurance that he was in Anne's neighbourhood, and that he was likely to pass the night under the same roof, both of which circumstances were intimated by this girl's presence and language, sent the blood in a hastier current through Arthur's veins; for though, since he had crossed the river, he had sometimes nourished hopes of again seeing her who had made so strong an impression on his imagination, yet his understanding had as often told him how slight was the chance of their meeting, and it was even now chilled by the reflection, that it could be followed only by the pain of a sudden and final separation. He yielded himself, however, to the prospect of promised pleasure, without attempting to ascertain what was to be its duration or its consequence. Desirous, in the

meantime, to hear as much of Anne's circumstances as Annette chose to tell, he resolved not to let that merry maiden perceive that she was known by him, until she chose of her own accord to lay aside her mystery.

While these thoughts passed rapidly through his imagination, Annette bade the lad drop his nets, and directed him that, having taken two of the best fed partridges from the covey, and carried them into the kitchen, he was to set the rest at liberty.

"I must provide supper," said she to the traveller, "since I am bringing home unexpected company."

Arthur earnestly expressed his hope that his experiencing the hospitality of the castle would occasion no trouble to the inmates, and received satisfactory assurances upon the subject of his scruples.

"I would not willingly be the cause of inconvenience to your mistress," pursued the traveller.

"La you there," said Annette Veilchen, "I have said nothing of master or mistress, and

this poor forlorn traveller has already concluded in his own mind that he is to be harboured in a lady's bower!"

"Why, did you not tell me," said Arthur, somewhat confused at his blunder, "that you were the person of second importance in the place? A damsel, I judged, could only be an officer under a female governor."

"I do not see the justice of the conclusion," replied the maiden. "I have known ladies bear offices of trust in lords' families; nay, and over the lords themselves."

"Am I to understand, fair damsel, that you hold so predominant a situation in the castle which we are now approaching, and of which I pray you to tell me the name?"

"The name of the castle is Arnheim," said Annette.

"Your garrison must be a large one," said Arthur, looking at the extensive building, "if you are able to man such a labyrinth of walls and towers."

"In that point," said Annette, "I must needs own we are very deficient. At present, we rather hide in the castle than inhabit it; and yet

it is well enough defended by the reports which frighten every other person who might disturb its seclusion."

"And yet you yourselves dare to reside in it?" said the Englishman, recollecting the tale which had been told by Rudolf Donnerhugel, concerning the character of the Barons of Arnheim, and the final catastrophe of the family.

"Perhaps," replied his guide, "we are too intimate with the cause of such fears to feel ourselves strongly oppressed with them—perhaps we have means of encountering the supposed terrors proper to ourselves—perhaps, and it is not the least likely conjecture, we have no choice of a better place of refuge. Such seems to be your own fate at present, sir, for the tops of the distant hills are gradually losing the lights of the evening; and if you rest not in Arnheim, well-contented or not, you are likely to find no safe lodging for many a mile."

As she thus spoke she separated from Arthur, taking, with the fowler who attended her, a very steep but short footpath, which ascended

straight up to the site of the castle; at the same time motioning to the young Englishman to follow a horse-track, which, more circuitous, led to the same point, and, though less direct, was considerably more easy.

He soon stood before the south front of Arnheim castle, which was a much larger building than he had conceived, either from Rudolf's description, or from the distant view. It had been erected at many different periods, and a considerable part of the edifice was less in the strict Gothic than in what has been termed the Saracenic style, in which the imagination of the architect is more florid than that which is usually indulged in the North,—rich in minarets, cupolas, and similar approximations to Oriental structures. This singular building bore a general appearance of desolation and desertion, but Rudolf had been misinformed when he declared that it had become ruinous. On the contrary, it had been maintained with considerable care; and when it fell into the hands of the Emperor, although no garrison was maintained within its precincts, care was taken to

keep the building in repair; and though the prejudices of the country people prevented any one from passing the night within the fearful walls, yet it was regularly visited from time to time by a person having commission from the Imperial Chancery to that effect. The occupation of the domain around the castle was a valuable compensation for this official person's labour, and he took care not to endanger the loss of it by neglecting his duty. Of late this officer had been withdrawn, and now it appeared that the young Baroness of Arnheim had found refuge in the deserted towers of her ancestors.

The Swiss damsel did not leave the youthful traveller time to study particularly the exterior of the castle, or to construe the meaning of emblems and mottos, seemingly of an Oriental character, with which the outside was inscribed, and which expressed in various modes, more or less directly, the attachment of the builders of this extensive pile to the learning of the Eastern sages. Ere he had time to take more than a general survey of the place, the voice of the Swiss maiden called him to an angle of

the wall in which there was a projection, from whence a long plank extended over a dry moat, and was connected with a window in which Annette was standing.

"You have forgotten your Swiss lessons already," said she, observing that Arthur went rather timidly about crossing the temporary and precarious drawbridge.

The reflection that Anne, her mistress, might make the same observation, recalled the young traveller to the necessary degree of composure. He passed over the plank with the same *sang froid* with which he had learned to brave the far more terrific bridge, beneath the ruinous Castle of Geierstein. He had no sooner entered the window than Annette, taking off her mask, bade him welcome to Germany, and to old friends with new names.

"Anne of Geierstein," she said, "is no more; but you will presently see the Lady Baroness of Arnheim, who is extremely like her; and I, who was Annette Veilchen in Switzerland, the servant to a damsel who was not esteemed much greater than myself, am now the young Baron-

ess's waiting-woman, and make every body of less quality stand back."

"If, in such circumstances," said young Philipson, "you have the influence due to your consequence, let me beseech of you to tell the Baroness, since we must now call her so, that my present intrusion on her is occasioned by my ignorance."

"Away, away," said the girl, laughing, "I know better what to say in your behalf. You are not the first poor man and pedlar that has got the graces of a great lady; but I warrant you it was not by making humble apologies, and talking of unintentional intrusion. I will tell her of love, which all the Rhine cannot quench, and which has driven you hither, leaving you no other choice than to come or to perish!"

"Nay, but Annette, Annette"——

"Fie on you for a fool,—make a shorter name of it,—cry Anne, Anne! and there will be more prospect of your being answered."

So saying, the wild girl ran out of the room, delighted, as a mountaineer of her description was likely to be, with the thought of having

done as she would desire to be done by, in her benevolent exertions to bring two lovers together, when on the eve of inevitable separation.

In this self-approving disposition, Annette sped up a narrow turnpike stair to a closet, or dressing-room, where her young mistress was seated, and exclaimed, with open mouth,—"Anne of Gei——, I mean my Lady Baroness, they are come—they are come!"

"The Philipsons?" said Anne, almost breathless as she asked the question.

"Yes—no—" answered the girl; "that is, yes,—for the best of them is come, and that is Arthur."

"What meanest thou, girl? Is not Signior Philipson, the father, along with his son?"

"Not he, indeed," answered Veilchen, "nor did I ever think of asking about him. He was no friend of mine, nor of any one else, save the old Landamman; and well met they were for a couple of wiseacres, with eternal proverbs in their mouths, and care upon their brows."

"Unkind, inconsiderate girl, what hast thou done!" said Anne of Geierstein. "Did I not

warn and charge thee to bring them both hither? and you have brought the young man alone to a place where we are nearly in solitude! What will he—what can he think of me?"

"Why, what should I have done?" said Annette, remaining firm in her argument. "He was alone, and should I have sent him down to the dorff to be murdered by the Rhingrave's Lanzknechts? All is fish, I trow, that comes to their net; and how is he to get through this country, so beset with wandering soldiers, robber barons, (I beg your ladyship's pardon,) and roguish Italians, flocking to the Duke of Burgundy's standard?—Not to mention the greatest terror of all, that is never in one shape or other absent from one's eye or thought."

"Hush, hush, girl! add not utter madness to the excess of folly; but let us think what is to be done. For our sake, for his own, this unfortunate young man must leave this castle instantly."

"You must take the message yourself then, Anne—I beg pardon, most noble Baroness;—it may be very fit for a lady of high birth to send

such a message, which, indeed, I have heard the Minne-singers tell in their romances; but I am sure it is not a meet one for me, or any frank-hearted Swiss girl, to carry. No more foolery; but remember, if you were born Baroness of Arnheim, you have been bred and brought up in the bosom of the Swiss hills, and should conduct yourself like an honest and well-meaning damsel."

"And in what does your wisdom reprehend my folly, good Mademoiselle Annette?" replied the Baroness.

"Ay, marry! now our noble blood stirs in our veins. But remember, gentle my lady, that it was a bargain between us, when I left yonder noble mountains, and the free air that blows over them, to coop myself up in this land of prisons and slaves, that I should speak my mind to you as freely as I did when our heads lay on the same pillow."

"Speak, then," said Anne, studiously averting her face as she prepared to listen; "but beware that you say nothing which it is unfit for me to hear."

"I will speak nature and common sense; and if your noble ears are not made fit to hear and understand these, the fault lies in them, and not in my tongue. Look you, you have saved this youth from two great dangers,—one at the earth-shoot at Geierstein, the other this very day, when his life was beset. A handsome young man he is, well spoken, and well qualified to gain deservedly a lady's favour. Before you saw him, the Swiss youth were at least not odious to you. You danced with them,—you jested with them,—you were the general object of their admiration,—and, as you well know, you might have had your choice through the Canton—Why, I think it possible a little urgency might have brought you to think of Rudolf Donnerhugel as your mate."

"Never, wench, never!" exclaimed Anne.

"Be not so very positive, my lady. Had he recommended himself to the uncle in the first place, I think, in my poor sentiment, he might at some lucky moment have carried the niece. But since we have known this young Englishman, it has been little less than contemning,

despising, and something like hating, all the men whom you could endure well enough before."

"Well, well," said Anne, "I will detest and hate thee more than any of them, unless you bring your matters to an end."

"Softly, noble lady, fair and easy go far. All this argues you love the young man, and let those say that you are wrong, who think there is any thing wonderful in the matter. There is much to justify you, and nothing that I know against it."

"What, foolish girl! Remember my birth forbids me to love a mean man—my condition to love a poor man—my father's commands to love one whose addresses are without his consent—above all, my maidenly pride forbids me fixing my affections on one who cares not for me,—nay, perhaps, is prejudiced against me by appearances."

"Here is a fine homily!" said Annette; "but I can clear every point of it as easily as Father Francis does his text in a holiday sermon. Your birth is a silly dream, which you have only learned to value within these two or three days, when,

having come to German soil, some of the old German weed, usually called family pride, has begun to germinate in your heart. Think of such folly as you thought when you lived at Geierstein, that is, during all the rational part of your life, and this great terrible prejudice will sink into nothing. By condition, I conceive you mean estate. But Philipson's father, who is the most free-hearted of men, will surely give his son as many zecchins as will stock a mountain farm. You have fire-wood for the cutting, and land for the occupying, since you are surely entitled to part of Geierstein, and gladly will your uncle put you in possession of it. You can manage the dairy, Arthur can shoot, hunt, fish, plough, harrow, and reap."

Anne of Geierstein shook her head, as if she greatly doubted her lover's skill in the last of the accomplishments enumerated.

"Well, well, he can learn, then," said Annette Veilchen; "and you will only live the harder the first year or so. Besides, Sigismund Biederman will aid him willingly, and he is a very horse at labour; and I know another besides, who is a friend"——

"Of thine own, I warrant," quoth the young Baroness.

"Marry, it is my poor friend, Louis Sprenger; and I'll never be so false-hearted as to deny my bachelor."

"Well, well, but what is to be the end of all this?" said the Baroness, impatiently.

"The end of it, in my opinion," said Annette, "is very simple. Here are priests and prayer-books within a mile—go down to the parlour, speak your mind to your lover, or hear him speak his mind to you; join hands, go quietly back to Geierstein in the character of man and wife, and get every thing ready to receive your uncle on his return. This is the way that a plain Swiss wench would cut off the romance of a German Baroness"——

"And break the heart of her father," said the young lady, with a sigh.

"It is more tough than you are aware of," replied Annette; "he hath not lived without you so long, but that he will be able to spare you for the rest of his life, a great deal more easily than you, with all your newfangled ideas of

quality, will be able to endure his schemes of wealth and ambition, which will aim at making you the wife of some illustrious Count, like De Hagenbach, whom we saw not long since make such an edifying end, to the great example of all Robber-Chivalry upon the Rhine."

"Thy plan is naught, wench; a childish vision of a girl, who never knew more of life than she has heard told over her milking-pail. Remember that my uncle entertains the highest ideas of family discipline, and that, to act contrary to my father's will, would destroy us in his good opinion. Why else am I here? wherefore has he resigned his guardianship? and why am I obliged to change the habits that are dear to me, and assume the manners of a people that are strange, and therefore unpleasing to me?"

"Your uncle," said Annette firmly, "is Landamman of the Canton of Unterwalden; respects its freedom, and is the sworn protector of its laws, of which, when you, a denizen of the Confederacy, claim the protection, he cannot refuse it to you."

"Even then," said the young Baroness, "I

should forfeit his good opinion, his more than paternal affection; but it is needless to dwell upon this. Know, that although I could have loved the young man, whom I will not deny to be as amiable as your partiality paints him—know,"—she hesitated for a moment,—"that he has never spoken a word to me on such a subject as you, without knowing either his sentiments or mine, would intrude on my consideration."

"Is it possible?" answered Annette. "I thought—I believed, though I have never pressed on your confidence—that you must—attached as you were to each other—have spoken together, like true maid and true bachelor, before now. I have done wrong, when I thought to do for the best.—Is it possible!—such things have been heard of even in our canton—is it possible he can have harboured so unutterably base purposes, as that Martin of Brisach, who made love to Adela of the Sundgau, enticed her to folly—the thing, though almost incredible, is true—fled,—fled from the country and boasted of his villainy, till her cousin Raymund

silenced for ever his infamous triumph, by beating his brains out with his club, even in the very street of the villain's native town? By the Holy Mother of Einsiedlen! could I suspect this Englishman of meditating such treason, I would saw the plank across the moat till a fly's weight would break it, and it should be at six fathom deep that he should abye the perfidy which dared to meditate dishonour against an adopted daughter of Switzerland!"

As Annette Veilchen spoke, all the fire of her mountain courage flashed from her eyes, and she listened reluctantly while Anne of Geierstein endeavoured to obliterate the dangerous impression which her former words had impressed on her simple but faithful attendant.

"On my word—" she said, "on my soul—you do Arthur Philipson injustice—foul injustice, in intimating such a suspicion;—his conduct towards me has ever been upright and honourable—a friend to a friend—a brother to a sister—could not, in all he has done and said, have been more respectful, more anxiously affectionate, more undeviatingly candid. In our

frequent interviews and intercourse he has indeed seemed very kind—very attached. But had I been disposed—at times I may have been too much so—to listen to him with endurance,"—the young lady here put her hand on her forehead, but the tears streamed through her slender fingers,—"he has never spoken of any love—any preference;—if he indeed entertains any, some obstacle, insurmountable on his part, has interfered to prevent him."

"Obstacle?" replied the Swiss damsel. "Ay, doubtless—some childish bashfulness—some foolish idea about your birth being so high above his own—some dream of modesty pushed to extremity, which considers as impenetrable the ice of a spring frost. This delusion may be broken by a moment's encouragement, and I will take the task on myself, to spare your blushes, my dearest Anne."

"No, no; for heaven's sake, no, Veilchen!" answered the Baroness, to whom Annette had so long been a companion and confidant, rather than a domestic. "You cannot anticipate the nature of the obstacles which may prevent his

thinking on what you are so desirous to promote. Hear me—My early education, and the instructions of my kind uncle, have taught me to know something more of foreigners and their fashions, than I ever could have learned in our happy retirement of Geierstein; I am wellnigh convinced that these Philipsons are of rank, as they are of manners and bearing, far superior to the occupation which they appear to hold. The father is a man of deep observation, of high thought and pretension, and lavish of gifts, far beyond what consists with the utmost liberality of a trader."

"That is true," said Annette; "I will say for myself, that the silver chain he gave me weighs against ten silver crowns, and the cross which Arthur added to it, the day after the long ride we had together up towards Mons Pilatre, is worth, they tell me, as much more. There is not the like of it in the Cantons. Well, what then? They are rich, so are you. So much the better."

"Alas! Annette, they are not only rich, but noble. I am persuaded of this; for I have ob-

served often, that even the father retreated, with an air of quiet and dignified contempt, from discussions with Donnerhugel and others, who, in our plain way, wished to fasten a dispute upon him. And when a rude observation or blunt pleasantry was pointed at the son, his eye flashed, his cheek coloured, and it was only a glance from his father which induced him to repress the retort of no friendly character which rose to his lips."

"You have been a close observer," said Annette. "All this may be true, but I noted it not. But what then, I say once more? If Arthur has some fine noble name in his own country, are not you yourself Baroness of Arnheim? And I will frankly allow it as something of worth, if it smooths the way to a match, where I think you must look for happiness—I hope so, else I am sure it should have no encouragement from me."

"I do believe so, my faithful Veilchen; but, alas! how can you, in the state of natural freedom in which you have been bred, know, or even dream, of the various restraints which

this gilded or golden chain of rank and nobility hangs upon those whom it fetters and encumbers, I fear, as much as it decorates? In every country, the distinction of rank binds men to certain duties. It may carry with it restrictions, which may prevent alliances in foreign countries—it often may prevent them from consulting their inclinations, when they wed in their own. It leads to alliances in which the heart is never consulted, to treaties of marriage, which are often formed when the parties are in the cradle, or in leading strings, but which are not the less binding on them in honour and faith. Such may exist in the present case. These alliances are often blended and mixed up with state policy; and if the interest of England, or what he deems such, should have occasioned the elder Philipson to form such an engagement, Arthur would break his own heart—the heart of any one else—rather than make false his father's word."

"The more shame to them that formed such an engagement!" said Annette. "Well, they talk of England being a free country; but if

they can bar young men and women of the natural privilege to call their hands and hearts their own, I would as soon be a German serf.—Well, lady, you are wise, and I am ignorant. But what is to be done? I have brought this young man here, expecting, God knows, a happier issue to your meeting. But it is clear you cannot marry him without his asking you. Now, although I confess that, if I could think him willing to forfeit the hand of the fairest maid of the Cantons, either from want of manly courage to ask it, or from regard to some ridiculous engagement, formed betwixt his father and some other nobleman of their island of noblemen, I would not in either case grudge him a ducking in the moat; yet it is another question, whether we should send him down to be murdered among those cut-throats of the Rhingrave; and unless we do so, I know not how to get rid of him."

"Then let the boy William give attendance on him here, and do you see to his accommodation. It is best we do not meet."

"I will," said Annette; "yet what am I to

say for you? Unhappily, I let him know that you were here."

"Alas, imprudent girl! Yet why should I blame thee," said Anne of Geierstein, "when the imprudence has been so great on my own side. It is myself, who, suffering my imagination to rest too long upon this young man and his merits, have led me into this entanglement. But I will show thee that I can overcome this folly, and I will not seek in my own error a cause for evading the duties of hospitality. Go, Veilchen, get some refreshment ready. Thou shalt sup with us, and thou must not leave us. Thou shalt see me behave as becomes both a German lady and a Swiss maiden. Get me first a candle, however, my girl, for I must wash these tell-tales, my eyes, and arrange my dress."

To Annette this whole explanation had been one scene of astonishment, for, in the simple ideas of love and courtship in which she had been brought up amid the Swiss mountains, she had expected that the two lovers would have taken the first opportunity of the absence of their natural guardians, and have united themselves

for ever; and she had even arranged a little secondary plot, in which she herself and Martin Sprenger, her faithful bachelor, were to reside with the young couple as friends and dependents. Silenced, therefore, but not satisfied, by the objections of her young mistress, the zealous Annette retreated murmuring to herself,—"That little hint about her dress is the only natural and sensible word she has said in my hearing. Please God, I will return and help her in the twinkling of an eye. That dressing my mistress is the only part of a waiting-lady's life that I have the least fancy for—it seems so natural for one pretty maiden to set off another—in faith we are but learning to dress ourselves at another time."

And with this sage remark Annette Veilchen tripped down stairs.

CHAPTER X.

> Tell me not of it—I could ne'er abide
> The mummery of all that forced civility.
> "Pray, seat yourself, my lord." With cringing hams
> The speech is spoken, and, with bended knee,
> Heard by the smiling courtier.—"Before you, sir?
> It must be on the earth, then." Hang it all!
> The pride which cloaks itself in such poor fashion
> Is scarcely fit to swell a beggar's bosom."
>
> *Old Play.*

UP stairs and down stairs tripped Annette Veilchen, the soul of all that was going on in the only habitable corner of the huge castle of Arnheim. She was equal to every kind of service, and therefore popped her head into the stable to be sure that William attended properly to Arthur's horse, looked into the kitchen to see that the old cook, Marthon, roasted the partridges in due time, (an interference for which she received little thanks,) rummaged out a flask or two of Rhine wine from the huge Dom Daniel of a

cellar, and, finally, just peeped into the parlour to see how Arthur was looking; when, having the satisfaction to see he had in the best manner he could sedulously arranged his person, she assured him that he should shortly see her mistress, who was rather indisposed, yet could not refrain from coming down to see so valued an acquaintance.

Arthur blushed when she spoke thus, and seemed so handsome in the waiting-maid's eye, that she could not help saying to herself, as she went to her young lady's room,—"Well, if true love cannot manage to bring that couple together, in spite of all the obstacles that they stand boggling at, I will never believe that there is such a thing as true love in the world, let Martin Sprenger say what he will, and swear to it on the gospels."

When she reached the young Baroness's apartment, she found, to her surprise, that, instead of having put on what finery she possessed, that young lady's choice had preferred the same simple kirtle which she had worn during the first day that Arthur had dined at Geierstein.

Annette looked at first puzzled and doubtful, then suddenly recognised the good taste which had dictated the attire, and exclaimed,—“ You are right—you are right—it is best to meet him as a free-hearted Swiss maiden.”

Anne also smiled as she replied,—“ But, at the same time, in the walls of Arnheim, I must appear in some respect as the daughter of my father.—Here, girl, aid me to put this gem upon the ribband which binds my hair.”

It was an aigrette, or plume, composed of two feathers of a vulture, fastened together by an opal, which changed to the changing light with a variability which enchanted the Swiss damsel, who had never seen any thing resembling it in her life.

“ Now, Baroness Anne,” said she, “ if that pretty thing be really worn as a sign of your rank, it is the only thing belonging to your dignity that I should ever think of coveting; for it doth shimmer and change colour after a most wonderful fashion, even something like one's own cheek when one is fluttered.”

“ Alas, Annette !” said the Baroness, passing

her hand across her eyes, "of all the gawds which the females of my house have owned, this perhaps hath been the most fatal to its possessors."

"And why then wear it?" said Annette. "Why wear it now, of all days in the year?"

"Because it best reminds me of my duty to my father and family. And now, girl, look thou sit with us at table, and leave not the apartment; and see thou fly not to and fro to help thyself or others with any thing on the board, but remain quiet and seated till William helps you to what you have occasion for."

"Well, that is a gentle fashion, which I like well enough," said Annette, "and William serves us so debonairly, that it is a joy to see him; yet, ever and anon, I feel as I were not Annette Veilchen herself, but only Annette Veilchen's picture, since I can neither rise, sit down, run about, or stand still, without breaking some rule of courtly breeding. It is not so, I dare say, with you, who are always mannerly."

"Less courtly than thou seemest to think," said the high-born maiden; "but I feel the re-

straint more on the greensward, and under heaven's free air, than when I undergo it closed within the walls of an apartment."

"Ah, true—the dancing," said Annette; "that was something to be sorry for indeed."

"But most am I sorry, Annette, that I cannot tell whether I act precisely right or wrong in seeing this young man, though it must be for the last time. Were my father to arrive?—Were Ital Schreckenwald to return"——

"Your father is too deeply engaged on some of his dark and mystic errands," said the flippant Swiss; "sailed to the mountains of the Brocken-berg, where witches hold their Sabbath, or gone on a hunting-party with the Wild Huntsman."

"Fie, Annette, how dare you talk thus of my father?"

"Why, I know little of him personally," said the damsel, "and you yourself do not know much more. And how should that be false which all men say is true?"

"Why, fool, what do they say?"

"Why, that the Count is a wizard,—that

your grandmother was a will-of-wisp, and old Ital Schreckenwald a born devil incarnate; and there is some truth in that, whatever comes of the rest."

"Where is he?"

"Gone down to spend the night in the village, to see the Rhingrave's men quartered, and keep them in some order, if possible; for the soldiers are disappointed of pay which they had been promised; and when this happens, nothing resembles a Lanzknecht except a chafed bear."

"Go we down then, girl; it is perhaps the last night which we may spend, for years, with a certain degree of freedom."

I will not pretend to describe the marked embarrassment with which Arthur Philipson and Anne of Geierstein met; neither lifted their eyes, neither spoke intelligibly, as they greeted each other, and the maiden herself did not blush more deeply than her modest visitor; while the good-humoured Swiss girl, whose ideas of love partook of the freedom of a more Arcadian country and its customs, looked on with eye-brows a little arched, much in wonder,

and a little in contempt, at a couple, who, as she might think, acted with such unnatural and constrained reserve. Deep was the reverence and the blush with which Arthur offered his hand to the young lady, and her acceptance of the courtesy had the same character of extreme bashfulness, agitation, and embarrassment. In short, though little or nothing intelligible passed between this very handsome and interesting couple, the interview itself did not on that account lose any interest. Arthur handed the maiden, as was the duty of a gallant of the day, into the next room, where their repast was prepared; and Annette, who watched with singular attention every thing which occurred, felt with astonishment, that the forms and ceremonies of the higher orders of society had such an influence, even over her freeborn mind, as the rites of the Druids, over that of the Roman general, when he said,

"I scorn them, yet they awe me."

"What can have changed them?" said Annette; "when at Geierstein they looked but like another girl and bachelor, only that Anne

is so very handsome; but now they move in time and manner as if they were leading a stately pavin, and behave to each other with as much formal respect as if he were Landamman of the Unterwalden, and she the first lady of Berne. 'Tis all very fine doubtless, but it is not the way that Martin Sprenger makes love."

Apparently, the circumstances in which each of the young people were placed, recalled to them the habits of lofty, and somewhat formal courtesy, to which they might have been accustomed in former days; and while the Baroness felt it necessary to observe the strictest decorum, in order to qualify the reception of Arthur into the interior of her retreat, he, on the other hand, endeavoured to show, by the profoundness of his respect, that he was incapable of misusing the kindness with which he had been treated. They placed themselves at table, scrupulously observing the distance which might become a "virtuous gentleman and maid." The youth William did the service of the entertainment with deftness and courtesy, as one well-accustomed to such duty; and Annette,

placing herself between them, and endeavouring as closely as she could, to adhere to the ceremonies which she saw them observe, made practice of the civilities which were expected from the attendant of a baroness. Various, however, were the errors which she committed. Her demeanour in general was that of a greyhound in the slips, ready to start up every moment; and she was only withheld by the recollection that she was to ask for that which she had far more mind to help herself to.

Other points of etiquette were transgressed in their turn, after the repast was over, and the attendant had retired. The waiting damsel often mingled too unceremoniously in the conversation, and could not help calling her mistress by her Christian name of Anne, and, in defiance of all decorum, addressed her, as well as Philipson, with the pronoun *thou*, which then, as well as now, was a dreadful solecism in German politeness. Her blunders were so far fortunate, that by furnishing the young lady and Arthur with a topic foreign to the peculiarities of their own situation, they enabled them to

withdraw their attentions from its embarrassments, and to exchange smiles at poor Annette's expense. She was not long of perceiving this, and half nettled, half availing herself of the apology to speak her mind, said, with considerable spirit, "You have both been very merry, forsooth, at my expense, and all because I wished rather to rise and seek what I wanted, than wait till the poor fellow, who was kept trotting between the board and beauffet, found leisure to bring it to me. You laugh at me now, because I call you by your names, as they were given to you in the blessed church at your christening; and because I say to you *thee* and *thou*, addressing my Juncker and my Yungfrau as I would do if I were on my knees praying to Heaven. But for all your new-world fancies, I can tell you, you are but a couple of children, who do not know your own minds, and are jesting away the only leisure given you to provide for your own happiness. Nay, frown not, my sweet Mistress Baroness. I have looked at Mont Pilatre too often, to fear a gloomy brow."

"Peace, Annette," said her mistress, "or quit the room."

"Were I not more your friend than I am my own," said the headstrong and undaunted Annette, "I would quit the room, and the castle to boot, and leave you to hold your house here, with your amiable seneschal, Ital Schreckenwald."

"If not for love, yet for shame, for charity, be silent, or leave the room."

"Nay," said Annette, "my bolt is shot, and I have but hinted at what all upon Geierstein Green said, the night when the bow of Buttisholz was bended. You know what the old saw says"——

"Peace! peace, for Heaven's sake, or I must needs fly!" said the young Baroness.

"Nay, then," said Annette, considerably changing her tone, as if afraid that her mistress should actually retire, "if you must fly, necessity must have its course. I know no one who can follow. This mistress of mine, Signior Arthur, would require for her attendant, not a homely girl of flesh and blood like myself, but a

waiting woman with substance composed of gossamer, and breath supplied by the spirit of æther. Would you believe it—It is seriously held by many, that she partakes of the race of spirits of the elements, which makes her so much more bashful than maidens of this every-day world."

Anne of Geierstein seemed rather glad to lead away the conversation from the turn which her wayward maiden had given to it, and to turn it on more indifferent subjects, though these were still personal to herself.

"Signior Arthur," she said, "thinks, perhaps, he has some room to nourish some such strange suspicion as your heedless folly expresses, and some fools believe, both in Germany and Switzerland. Confess, Signior Arthur, you thought strangely of me when I passed your guard upon the bridge of Graffs-lust, on the night last past."

The recollection of the circumstances which had so greatly surprised him at the time, so startled Arthur, that it was with some difficulty he commanded himself, so as to attempt an

answer at all; and what he did say on the occasion was broken and unconnected.

"I did hear, I own—that is, Rudolf Donnerhugel reported—But that I believed that you, gentle lady, were other than a Christian maiden"——

"Nay, if Rudolf were the reporter," said Annette, "you would hear the worst of my lady and her lineage, that is certain. He is one of those prudent personages who depreciate and find fault with the goods he has thoughts of purchasing, in order to deter other offerers. Yes, he told you a fine goblin story, I warrant you, of my lady's grandmother; and truly, it so happened, that the circumstances of the case gave, I dare say, some colour in your eyes to"——

"Not so, Annette," answered Arthur; "whatever might be said of your lady that sounded uncouth and strange, fell to the ground as incredible."

"Not quite so much so, I fancy," interrupted Annette, without heeding sign or frown. "I strongly suspect I should have had much more trouble in dragging you hither to this castle,

had you known you were approaching the haunt of the Nymph of the Fire, the Salamander, as they call her, not to mention the shock of again seeing the descendant of that Maiden of the Fiery Mantle."

"Peace, once more, Annette," said her mistress; "since Fate has occasioned this meeting, let us not neglect the opportunity to disabuse our English friend, of the absurd report he has listened to with doubt and wonder perhaps, but not with absolute incredulity.

"Signior Arthur Philipson," she proceeded, "it is true my grandfather, by the mother's side, Baron Herman of Arnheim, was a man of great knowledge in abstruse sciences. He was also a presiding judge of a tribunal of which you must have heard, called the Holy Vehme. One night a stranger, closely pursued by the agents of that body, which (crossing herself) it is not safe even to name, arrived at the castle and craved his protection, and the rights of hospitality. My grandfather, finding the advance which the stranger had made to the rank of Adept, gave him his protection, and became bail to deliver

him to answer the charge against him, for a year and a day, which delay he was, it seems, entitled to require on his behalf. They studied together during that term, and pushed their researches into the mysteries of nature, as far, in all probability, as men have the power of urging them. When the fatal day drew nigh on which the guest must part from his host, he asked permission to bring his daughter to the castle, that they might exchange a last farewell. She was introduced with much secrecy, and after some days, finding that her father's fate was so uncertain, the Baron, with the sage's consent, agreed to give the forlorn maiden refuge in his castle, hoping to obtain from her some additional information concerning the languages and the wisdom of the East. Danischemend, her father, left this castle, to go to render himself up to the Vehmegericht at Fulda. The result is unknown; perhaps he was saved by Baron Arnheim's testimony, perhaps he was given up to the steel and the cord. On such matters, who dare speak?

"The fair Persian became the wife of her guardian and protector. Amid many excellences,

she had one peculiarity allied to imprudence. She availed herself of her foreign dress and manners, as well as of a beauty, which was said to have been marvellous, and an agility seldom equalled, to impose upon and terrify the ignorant German ladies, who, hearing her speak Persian and Arabic, were already disposed to consider her as over closely connected with unlawful arts. She was of a fanciful and imaginative disposition, and delighted to place herself in such colours and circumstances as might confirm their most ridiculous suspicions, which she considered only as matter of sport. There was no end to the stories to which she gave rise. Her first appearance in the castle was said to be highly picturesque, and to have inferred something of the marvellous. With the levity of a child, she had some childish passions, and while she encouraged the growth and circulation of the most extraordinary legends amongst some of the neighbourhood, she entered into disputes with persons of her own quality concerning rank and precedence, on which the ladies of Westphalia have at all times set great

store. This cost her her life; for, on the morning of the christening of my poor mother, the Baroness of Arnheim died suddenly, even while a splendid company was assembled in the castle chapel to witness the ceremony. It was believed that she died of poison, administered by the Baroness Steinfeldt, with whom she was engaged in a bitter quarrel, entered into chiefly on behalf of her friend and companion, the Countess Waldstetten."

"And the opal gem?—and the sprinkling with water?" said Arthur Philipson.

"Ah!" replied the young Baroness, "I see you desire to hear the real truth of my family history, of which you have yet learned only the romantic legend.—The sprinkling of water was necessarily had recourse to, on my ancestress's first swoon. As for the opal, I have heard that it did indeed grow pale, but only because it is said to be the nature of that noble gem, on the approach of poison. Some part of the quarrel with the Baroness Steinfeldt was about the right of the Persian maiden to wear this stone, which an ancestor of my family won in battle from the

Soldan of Trebizond. All these things were confused in popular tradition, and the real facts turned into a fairy tale."

"But you have said nothing," suggested Arthur Philipson, "on—on——"

"On what?" said his hostess.

"On your appearance last night."

"Is it possible," said she, "that a man of sense, and an Englishman, cannot guess at the explanation which I have to give, though not, perhaps, very distinctly? My father, you are aware, has been a busy man in a disturbed country, and has incurred the hatred of many powerful persons. He is, therefore, obliged to move in secret, and avoid unnecessary observation. He was, besides, averse to meet his brother, the Landamman. I was, therefore, told, on our entering Germany, that I was to expect a signal where and when to join him,—the token was to be a small crucifix of bronze, which had belonged to my poor mother. In my apartment at Graffs-lust I found the token, with a note from my father, making me acquainted with a secret passage proper to such places, which,

though it had the appearance of being blocked up, was in fact very slightly barricaded. By this I was instructed to pass to the gate, make my escape into the woods, and meet my father at a place appointed there."

"A wild and perilous adventure," said Arthur.

"I have never been so much shocked," continued the maiden, "as at receiving this summons, compelling me to steal away from my kind and affectionate uncle, and go I knew not whither. Yet compliance was absolutely necessary. The place of meeting was plainly pointed out. A midnight walk, in the neighbourhood of protection, was to me a trifle; but the precaution of posting sentinels at the gate might have interfered with my purpose, had I not mentioned it to some of my elder cousins, the Biedermans, who readily agreed to let me pass and repass unquestioned. But you know my cousins; honest and kind-hearted, they are of a rude way of thinking, and as incapable of feeling a generous delicacy as—some other persons." —(Here there was a glance towards Annette

Veilchen.)—" They exacted from me, that I should conceal myself and my purpose from Sigismund; and as they are always making sport with the simple youth, they insisted that I should pass him in such a manner as might induce him to believe that I was a spiritual apparition, and out of his terrors for supernatural beings, they expected to have much amusement. I was obliged to secure their connivance at my escape on their own terms; and, indeed, I was too much grieved at the prospect of quitting my kind uncle, to think much of any thing else. Yet my surprise was considerable, when, contrary to expectation, I found you on the bridge as sentinel, instead of my cousin Sigismund. Your own ideas I ask not for."

" They were those of a fool," said Arthur, " of a thrice-sodden fool. Had I been aught else, I would have offered my escort. My sword——"

" I could not have accepted your protection," said Anne, calmly. " My mission was in every respect a secret one. I met my father—some intercourse had taken place betwixt him and Rudolf Donnerhugel, which induced him to alter

his purpose of carrying me away with him last night. I joined him, however, early this morning, while Annette acted for a time my part amongst the Swiss pilgrims. My father desired that it should not be known when or with whom I left my uncle and his escort. I need scarce remind you, that I saw you in the dungeon."

"You were the preserver of my life," said the youth,—"the restorer of my liberty."

"Ask me not the reason of my silence. I was then acting under the agency of others, not under mine own. Your escape was effected, in order to establish a communication betwixt the Swiss without the fortress and the soldiers within. After the alarm at La Ferette, I learned from Sigismund Biederman that a party of banditti were pursuing your father and you, with a view to pillage and robbery. My father had furnished me with the means of changing Anne of Geierstein into a German maiden of quality. I set out instantly, and glad I am to have given you a hint which might free you from danger."

"But my father?" said Arthur.

"I have every reason to hope he is well and

safe," answered the young lady. "More than I were eager to protect both you and him—poor Sigismund amongst the first.—And now, my friend, these mysteries explained, it is time we part, and for ever."

"Part!—and for ever!" repeated the youth, in a voice like a dying echo.

"It is our fate," said the maiden. "I appeal to you if it is not your duty—I tell you it is mine. You will depart with early dawn to Strasburg—and—and—we never meet again."

With an ardour of passion which he could not repress, Arthur Philipson threw himself at the feet of the maiden, whose faltering tone had clearly expressed that she felt deeply in uttering the words. She looked round for Annette, but Annette had disappeared at this most critical moment; and her mistress for a second or two was not perhaps sorry for her absence.

"Rise," she said, "Arthur—rise. You must not give way to feelings that might be fatal to yourself and me."

"Hear me, lady, before I bid you adieu, and for ever—the word of a criminal is heard, though

he plead the worst cause—I am a belted knight, and the son and heir of an Earl, whose name has been spread throughout England and France, and wherever valour has had fame."

"Alas!" said she, faintly, "I have but too long suspected what you now tell me—Rise, I pray you, rise."

"Never till you hear me," said the youth, seizing one of her hands, which trembled, but hardly could be said to struggle in his grasp.—"Hear me," he said, with the enthusiasm of first love, when the obstacles of bashfulness and diffidence are surmounted,—"My father and I are—I acknowledge it—bound on a most hazardous and doubtful expedition. You will very soon learn its issue for good or bad. If it succeed, you shall hear of me in my own character—if I fall, I must—I will—I do claim a tear from Anne of Geierstein. If I escape, I have yet a horse, a lance, and a sword; and you shall hear nobly of him whom you have thrice protected from imminent danger."

"Arise—arise," repeated the maiden, whose tears began to flow fast, as, struggling to raise

her lover, they fell thick upon his head and face. "I have heard enough—to listen to more were indeed madness, both for you and myself."

"Yet one single word," added the youth; "while Arthur has a heart, it beats for you—while Arthur can wield an arm, it strikes for you, and in your cause."

Annette now rushed into the room.

"Away, away!" she cried—"Schreckenwald has returned from the village with some horrible tidings, and I fear me he comes this way."

Arthur had started to his feet at the first signal of alarm.

"If there is danger near your lady, Annette, there is at least one faithful friend by her side."

Annette looked anxiously at her mistress.

"But Schreckenwald," she said—"Schreckenwald, your father's steward—his confident.—O, think better of it—I can hide Arthur somewhere."

The noble-minded girl had already resumed her composure, and replied with dignity.—"I

have done nothing," she said, "to offend my father. If Schreckenwald be my father's steward, he is my vassal. I hide no guest to conciliate him. Sit down," (addressing Arthur,) "and let us receive this man.—Introduce him instantly, Annette, and let us hear his tidings—and bid him remember, that when he speaks to me he addresses his mistress."

Arthur resumed his seat, still more proud of his choice from the noble and fearless spirit displayed by one who had so lately shown herself sensible to the gentlest feelings of the female sex.

Annette, assuming courage from her mistress's dauntless demeanour, clapped her hands together as she left the room, saying, but in a low voice, "I see that after all it is something to be a Baroness, if one can assert her dignity conformingly. How could I be so much frightened for this rude man!"

CHAPTER XI.

——— Affairs that walk
(As they say spirits do) at midnight, have
In them a wilder nature, than the business
That seeks dispatch by day.
Henry VIII. Act V.

THE approach of the steward was now boldly expected by the little party. Arthur, flattered at once and elevated by the firmness which Anne had shown when this person's arrival was announced, hastily considered the part which he was to act in the approaching scene, and prudently determined to avoid all active and personal interference, till he should observe from the demeanour of Anne, that such was likely to be useful or agreeable to her. He resumed his place, therefore, at a distant part of the board,

on which their meal had been lately spread, and remained there, determined to act in the manner Anne's behaviour should suggest as most prudent and fitting,—veiling, at the same time, the most acute internal anxiety, by an appearance of that deferential composure, which one of inferior rank adopts when admitted to the presence of a superior. Anne, on her part, seemed to prepare herself for an interview of interest. An air of conscious dignity succeeded the extreme agitation which she had so lately displayed, and, busying herself with some articles of female work, she also seemed to expect with tranquillity the visit, to which her attendant was disposed to attach so much alarm.

A step was heard upon the stair, hurried and unequal, as that of some one in confusion as well as haste; the door flew open, and Ital Schreckenwald entered.

This person, with whom the details given to the elder Philipson by the Landamman Biederman have made the reader in some degree acquainted, was a tall, well-made, soldierly-looking man. His dress, like that of persons of rank

at the period in Germany, was more varied in colour, more cut and ornamented, slashed and jagged, than the habit worn in France and England. The never-failing hawk's feather decked his cap, secured with a medal of gold, which served as a clasp. His doublet was of buff, for defence, but *laid down*, as it was called in the tailors' craft, with rich lace on each seam, and displaying on the breast a golden chain, the emblem of his rank in the Baron's household. He entered with rather a hasty step, and busy and offended look, and said somewhat rudely,—"Why, how now, young lady—wherefore this? Strangers in the castle at this period of night!"

Anne of Geierstein, though she had been long absent from her native country, was not ignorant of its habits and customs, and knew the haughty manner in which all who were noble exerted their authority over their dependents.

"Are you a vassal of Arnheim, Ital Schreckenwald, and do you speak to the Lady of Arnheim in her own castle with an elevated voice, saucy look, and bonneted withal? Know

your place; and, when you have demanded pardon for your insolence, and told your errand in such terms as befit your condition and mine, I may listen to what you have to say."

Schreckenwald's hand, in spite of him, stole to his bonnet, and uncovered his haughty brow.

"Noble lady," he said, in a somewhat milder tone, "excuse me if my haste be unmannerly, but the alarm is instant. The soldiery of the Rhingrave have mutinied, plucked down the banners of their master, and set up an independent ensign, which they call the pennon of St Nicholas, under which they declare that they will maintain peace with God, and war with all the world. This castle cannot escape them, when they consider that the first course to maintain themselves, must be to take possession of some place of strength. You must up then, and ride with the very peep of dawn. For the present, they are busy with the wine-skins of the peasants, but when they wake in the morning, they will unquestionably march hither; and you may chance to fall into the hands of those who will think of the terrors of the castle of Arn-

heim as the figments of a fairy-tale, and laugh at its mistress's pretensions to honour and respect."

"Is it impossible to make resistance? The castle is strong," said the young lady, "and I am unwilling to leave the house of my fathers without attempting somewhat in our defence."

"Five hundred men," said Schreckenwald, "might garrison Arnheim, battlement and tower. With a less number it were madness to attempt to keep such an extent of walls; and how to get twenty soldiers together, I am sure I know not.—So, having now the truth of the story, let me beseech you to dismiss this guest,—too young, I think, to be inmate of a lady's bower, —and I will point to him the nighest way out of the castle; for this is a strait in which we must all be contented with looking to our own safety."

"And whither is it that you propose to go?" said the Baroness, continuing to maintain, in respect to Ital Schreckenwald, the complete and calm assertion of absolute superiority, to which the seneschal gave way with such marks of im-

patience, as a fiery steed exhibits under the management of a complete cavalier.

"To Strasburg, I propose to go,—that is, if it so please you,—with such slight escort as I can get hastily together by day-break. I trust we may escape being observed by the mutineers; or, if we fall in with a party of stragglers, I apprehend but little difficulty in forcing my way."

"And wherefore do you prefer Strasburg as a place of asylum?"

"Because I trust we shall there meet your excellency's father, the noble Count Albert of Geierstein."

"It is well," said the young lady. "You also, I think, Signior Philipson, spoke of directing your course to Strasburg. If it consist with your convenience, you may avail yourself of the protection of my escort as far as that city, where you expect to meet your father?"

It will readily be believed, that Arthur cheerfully bowed assent to a proposal which was to prolong their remaining in society together; and might possibly, as his romantic imagination suggested, afford him an opportunity, on a

road beset with dangers, to render some service of importance.

Ital Schreckenwald attempted to remonstrate.

"Lady!—lady!"—he said, with some marks of impatience.

"Take breath and leisure, Schreckenwald," said Anne, "and you will be more able to express yourself with distinctness, and with respectful propriety."

The impatient vassal muttered an oath betwixt his teeth, and answered with forced civility,—"Permit me to state, that our case requires we should charge ourselves with the care of no one but you. We shall be few enough for your defence, and I cannot permit any stranger to travel with us."

"If," said Arthur, "I conceived that I was to be a useless encumbrance on the retreat of this noble young lady, worlds, Sir Squire, would not induce me to accept her offer. But I am neither child nor woman—I am a full-grown man, and ready to show such good service as manhood may in defence of your lady."

"If we must not challenge your valour and ability, young sir," said Schreckenwald, "who shall answer for your fidelity?"

"To question that elsewhere," said Arthur, "might be dangerous."

But Anne interfered between them. "We must straight to rest, and remain prompt for alarm, perhaps even before the hour of dawn. Schreckenwald, I trust to your care for due watch and ward—You have men enough at least for that purpose.—And hear and mark—It is my desire and command, that this gentleman be accommodated with lodgings here for this night, and that he travel with us to-morrow. For this I will be responsible to my father, and your part is only to obey my commands. I have long had occasion to know both the young man's father and himself, who were ancient guests of my uncle, the Landamman. On the journey you will keep the youth beside you, and use such courtesy to him as your rugged temper will permit."

Ital Schreckenwald intimated his acquiescence with a look of bitterness, which it were

vain to attempt to describe. It expressed spite, mortification, humbled pride, and reluctant submission. He did submit, however, and ushered young Philipson into a decent apartment with a bed, which the fatigue and agitation of the preceding day rendered very acceptable.

Notwithstanding the ardour with which Arthur expected the rise of the next dawn, his deep repose, the fruit of fatigue, held him until the reddening of the east, when the voice of Schreckenwald exclaimed, "Up, Sir Englishman, if you mean to accomplish your boast of loyal service. It is time we were in the saddle, and we shall tarry for no sluggards."

Arthur was on the floor of the apartment, and dressed, in almost an instant, not forgetting to put on his shirt of mail, and assume whatever weapons seemed most fit to render him an efficient part of the convoy. He next hastened to seek out the stable, to have his horse in readiness; and descending for that purpose into the under story of the lower mass of buildings, he was wandering in search of the way which led to the offices, when the voice of Annette

Veilchen softly whispered, "This way, Signior Philipson; I would speak with you."

The Swiss maiden, at the same time, beckoned him into a small room, where he found her alone.

"Were you not surprised," she said, "to see my lady queen it so over Ital Schreckenwald, who keeps every other person in awe with his stern looks and cross words? But the air of command seems so natural to her, that, instead of being a baroness, she might have been an empress. It must come of birth, I think, after all, for I tried last night to take state upon me, after the fashion of my mistress, and, would you think it, the brute Schreckenwald threatened to throw me out of the window? But if ever I see Martin Sprenger again, I'll know if there is strength in a Swiss arm, and virtue in a Swiss quarter-staff.—But here I stand prating, and my lady wishes to see you for a minute ere we take to horse."

"Your lady?" said Arthur, starting, "why did you lose an instant?—why not tell me before?"

"Because I was only to keep you here till she came, and—here she is."

Anne of Geierstein entered, fully attired for her journey. Annette, always willing to do as she would wish to be done by, was about to leave the apartment, when her mistress, who had apparently made up her mind concerning what she had to do or say, commanded her positively to remain.

"I am sure," she said, "Signior Philipson will rightly understand the feelings of hospitality—I will say of friendship—which prevented my suffering him to be expelled from my castle last night, and which have determined me this morning to admit of his company on the somewhat dangerous road to Strasburg. At the gate of that town we part, I to join my father, you to place yourself under the direction of yours. From that moment intercourse between us ends, and our remembrance of each other must be as the thoughts which we pay to friends deceased."

"Tender recollections," said Arthur, pas-

sionately, "more dear to our bosoms than all we have surviving upon earth."

"Not a word in that tone," answered the maiden. "With night delusion should end, and reason awaken with dawning. One word more —Do not address me on the road; you may, by doing so, expose me to vexatious and insulting suspicion, and yourself to quarrels and peril.—Farewell, our party is ready to take horse."

She left the apartment, where Arthur remained for a moment deeply bewildered in grief and disappointment. The patience, nay, even favour, with which Anne of Geierstein had, on the previous night, listened to his passion, had not prepared him for the terms of reserve and distance which she now adopted towards him. He was ignorant that noble maids, if feeling or passion has for a moment swayed them from the strict path of principle and duty, endeavour to atone for it, by instantly returning, and severely adhering, to the line from which they have made a momentary departure. He looked mournfully on Annette, who, as she had been in the room before Anne's arrival, took



the privilege of remaining a minute after her departure; but he read no comfort in the glances of the confidant, who seemed as much disconcerted as himself.

"I cannot imagine what hath happened to her," said Annette; "to me she is kind as ever, but to every other person about her she plays countess and baroness with a witness; and now she is begun to tyrannize over her own natural feelings—and—if this be greatness, Annette Veilchen trusts always to remain the penniless Swiss girl; she is mistress of her own freedom, and at liberty to speak with her bachelor when she pleases, so as religion and maiden modesty suffer nothing in the conversation. Oh, a single daisy twisted with content into one's hair, is worth all the opals in India, if they bind us to torment ourselves and other people, or hinder us from speaking our mind, when our heart is upon our tongue. But never fear, Arthur; for if she has the cruelty to think of forgetting you, youmay rely on one friend who, while she has a tongue, and Anne has ears, will make it impossible for her to do so."

So saying, away tripped Annette, having first indicated to Philipson the passage by which he would find the lower court of the castle. There his steed stood ready, among about twenty others. Twelve of these were accoutred with war saddles, and frontlets of proof, being intended for the use of as many cavaliers, or troopers, retainers of the family of Arnheim, whom the seneschal's exertions had been able to collect on the spur of the occasion. Two palfreys, somewhat distinguished by their trappings, were designed for Anne of Geierstein and her favourite female attendant. The other menials, chiefly boys and women servants, had inferior horses. At a signal made, the troopers took their lances and stood by their steeds, till the females and menials were mounted and in order; they then sprang into their saddles and began to move forward, slowly and with great precaution. Schreckenwald led the van, and kept Arthur Philipson close beside him. Anne and her attendant were in the centre of the little body, followed by the unwarlike train of servants, while two or three experienced cavaliers brought

up the rear, with strict orders to guard against surprise.

On their being put into motion, the first thing which surprised Arthur was, that the horses' hoofs no longer sent forth the sharp and ringing sound arising from the collision of iron and flint, and as the morning light increased, he could perceive, that the fetlock and hoof of every steed, his own included, had been carefully wrapped around with a sufficient quantity of wool, to prevent the usual noise which accompanied their motions. It was a singular thing to behold the passage of the little body of cavalry down the rocky road which led from the castle, unattended with the noise which we are disposed to consider as inseparable from the motions of horse, the absence of which seemed to give a peculiar and almost an unearthly appearance to the cavalcade.

They passed in this manner the winding path which led from the castle of Arnheim to the adjacent village, which, as was the ancient feudal custom, lay so near the fortress, that its inhabitants, when summoned by their lord,

could instantly repair for its defence. But it was at present occupied by very different inhabitants, the mutinous soldiers of the Rhingrave. When the party from Arnheim approached the entrance of the village, Schreckenwald made a signal to halt, which was instantly obeyed by his followers. He then rode forward in person to reconnoitre, accompanied by Arthur Philipson, both moving with the utmost steadiness and precaution. The deepest silence prevailed in the deserted streets. Here and there a soldier was seen, seemingly designed for a sentinel, but uniformly fast asleep.

"The swinish mutineers!" said Schreckenwald; "a fair night-watch they keep, and a beautiful morning's rouse would I treat them with, were not the point to protect yonder peevish wench.—Halt thou here, stranger, while I ride back and bring them on—there is no danger."

Schreckenwald left Arthur as he spoke, who, alone in the street of a village filled with banditti, though they were lulled into temporary insensibility, had no reason to consider his case

as very comfortable. The chorus of a wassel song, which some reveller was trolling over in his sleep; or, in its turn, the growling of some village cur, seemed the signal for an hundred ruffians to start up around him. But in the space of two or three minutes, the noiseless cavalcade, headed by Ital Schreckenwald, again joined him, and followed their leader, observing the utmost precaution not to give an alarm. All went well till they reached the farther end of the village, where, although the Baaren-hauter* who kept guard was as drunk as his companions on duty, a large shaggy dog which lay beside him was more vigilant. As the little troop approached, the animal sent forth a ferocious yell, loud enough to have broken the rest of the Seven Sleepers, and which effectually dispelled the slumbers of his master. The soldier snatched up his carabine and fired, he knew not well at what, or for what reason. The ball, however, struck Arthur's horse under him,

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* *Baaren-hauter*,—he of the Bear's hide,—a nickname for a German private soldier.

and, as the animal fell, the sentinel rushed forward to kill or make prisoner the rider.

"Haste on, haste on, men of Arnheim! care for nothing but the young lady's safety," exclaimed the leader of the band.

"Stay, I command you;—aid the stranger, on your lives!"—said Anne, in a voice which, usually gentle and meek, she now made heard by those around her, like the note of a silver clarion. "I will not stir till he is rescued."

Schreckenwald had already spurred his horse for flight; but, perceiving Anne's reluctance to follow him, he dashed back, and seizing a horse, which, bridled and saddled, stood picqueted near him, he threw the reins to Arthur Philipson: and pushing his own horse, at the same time, betwixt the Englishman and the soldier, he forced the latter to quit the hold he had on his person. In an instant Philipson was again mounted, when, seizing a battle-axe which hung at the saddle-bow of his new steed, he struck down the staggering sentinel, who was endeavouring again to seize upon him. The whole troop then rode off at a gallop, for the alarm began to grow

general in the village; some soldiers were seen coming out of their quarters, and others were beginning to get upon horseback. Before Schreckenwald and his party had ridden a mile, they heard more than once the sound of bugles; and when they arrived upon the summit of an eminence commanding a view of the village, their leader, who, during the retreat, had placed himself in the rear of his company, now halted to reconnoitre the enemy they had left behind them. There was bustle and confusion in the street, but there did not appear to be any pursuit; so that Schreckenwald followed his route down the river, with speed and activity indeed, but with so much steadiness at the same time, as not to distress the slowest horse of his party.

When they had ridden two hours and more, the confidence of their leader was so much augmented, that he ventured to command a halt at the edge of a pleasant grove, which served to conceal their number, whilst both riders and horses took some refreshment, for which purpose forage and provisions had been borne along with them. Ital Schreckenwald having held

some communication with the Baroness, continued to offer to their travelling companion a sort of surly civility. He invited him to partake his own mess, which was indeed little different from that which was served out to the other troopers, but was seasoned with a glass of wine from a more choice flask.

"To your health, brother," he said; "if you tell this day's story truly, you will allow that I was a true comrade to you two hours since, in riding through the village of Arnheim."

"I will never deny it, fair sir," said Philipson, "and I return you thanks for your timely assistance; alike, whether it sprang from your mistress's order, or your own good-will."

"Ho! ho! my friend," said Schreckenwald, laughing, "you are a philosopher, and can try conclusions while your horse lies rolling above you, and a Baaren-hauter aims his sword at your throat.—Well, since your wit hath discovered so much, I care not if you know, that I should not have had much scruple to sacrifice twenty such smooth-faced gentlemen as yourself, rather

than the young Baroness of Arnheim had incurred the slightest danger."

"The propriety of the sentiment," said Philipson, "is so undoubtedly correct, that I subscribe to it, even though it is something discourteously expressed towards myself."

In making this reply, the young man, provoked at the insolence of Schreckenwald's manner, raised his voice a little. The circumstance did not escape observation, for, on the instant, Annette Veilchen stood before them, with her mistress's commands on them both to speak in whispers, or rather to be altogether silent.

"Say to your mistress that I am mute," said Philipson.

"Our mistress, the Baroness, says," continued Annette, with an emphasis on the title, to which she began to ascribe some talismanic influence,—"the Baroness, I tell you, says, that silence much concerns our safety, for it were most hazardous to draw upon this little fugitive party the notice of any passengers who may pass along the road during the necessary halt; and so, sirs, it is the Baroness's request that you

will continue the exercise of your teeth as fast as you can, and forbear that of your tongues till you are in a safer condition."

"My lady is wise," answered Ital Schreckenwald, "and her maiden is witty. I drink, Mrs Annette, in a cup of Rudersheimer, to the continuance of her sagacity, and of your amiable liveliness of disposition. Will it please you, fair mistress, to pledge me in this generous liquor?"

"Out, thou German wine-flask!—Out, thou eternal swill-flagon!—Heard you ever of a modest maiden who drank wine before she had dined?"

"Remain without the generous inspiration then," said the German, "and nourish thy satirical vein on sour cider or acid whey."

A short space having been allowed to refresh themselves, the little party again mounted their horses, and travelled with such speed, that long before noon they arrived at the strongly fortified town of Kehl, opposite to Strasburg, on the eastern bank of the Rhine.

It is for local antiquaries to discover, whe-

ther the travellers crossed from Kehl to Strasburg by the celebrated bridge of boats which at present maintains the communication across the river, or whether they were wafted over by some other mode of transportation. It is enough that they passed in safety, and had landed on the other side, where—whether she dreaded that he might forget the charge she had given him, that here they were to separate, or whether she thought that something more might be said in the moment of parting—the young Baroness, before remounting her horse, once more approached Arthur Philipson, who too truly guessed the tenor of what she had to say.

"Gentle stranger," she said, "I must now bid you farewell. But first let me ask if you know whereabouts you are to seek your father?"

"In an inn called the Flying Stag," said Arthur, dejectedly; "but where that is situated in this large town, I know not."

"Do you know the place, Ital Schreckenwald?"

"I, young lady?—Not I—I know nothing

of Strasburg and its inns. I believe most of our party are as ignorant as I am."

"You and they speak German, I suppose," said the Baroness, dryly, "and can make enquiry more easily than a foreigner? Go, sir, and forget not that humanity to the stranger is a religious duty."

With that shrug of the shoulders which testifies a displeased messenger, Ital went to make some enquiry, and, in his absence, brief as it was, Anne took an opportunity to say apart,— "Farewell!—Farewell! Accept this token of friendship, and wear it for my sake. May you be happy!"

Her slender fingers dropped into his hand a very small parcel. He turned to thank her, but she was already at some distance; and Schreckenwald, who had taken his place by his side, said in his harsh voice, "Come, Sir Squire, I have found out your place of rendezvous, and I have but little time to play the gentleman-usher."

He then rode on; and Philipson, mounted on his military charger, followed him in silence

to the point where a large street joined, or rather crossed, that which led from the quay on which they had landed.

"Yonder swings the Flying Stag," said Ital, pointing to an immense sign, which, mounted on a huge wooden frame, crossed almost the whole breadth of the street. "Your intelligence can, I think, hardly abandon you, with such a guide-post in your eye."

So saying, he turned his horse without further farewell, and rode back to join his mistress and her attendants.

Philipson's eyes rested on the same group for a moment, when he was recalled to a sense of his situation by the thoughts of his father; and, spurring his jaded horse down the cross street, he reached the hostelrie of the Flying Stag.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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